

THE RACIAL DIVIDE IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL COACHING:  
GATEKEEPERS DICTATING THE WINNERS AND LOSERS

A Dissertation

by

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## ABSTRACT

Black head football coaches in NCAA collegiate athletics continue to be numerically marginalized. A common problem exposed in the literature is the tendency for researchers to approach the study of black coach underrepresentation from a lens that places racial discrimination as a “potential” cause of the black coach predicament. As a result, when examining the racial inequality in college athletics many of the theories utilized lack a critical race-based framework, thus minimizing the focus and severity of the race problem. These theoretical approaches also neglect to recognize that sport is a functioning piece of the larger cultural, economic, and political environments. Moreover, these frameworks are absent of an agenda to interrogate the gatekeepers, the whites who hold the hiring decision authority, which suggests these individuals are not responsible for the race problem in sport leadership. Minimizing racism and the scope of its impact sends a message that sport is a unique institution, one where its issues are independent from society at large. This study makes up for these limitations.

Guided by systemic racism theory, the purpose of this study was to apply a mixed-method design to better understand racial inequality within the leadership structure of NCAA collegiate football programs. Part I compared various performances between black and white head coaches. Results revealed that although there were no differences in performances between coaches, black coaches were terminated significantly sooner than white coaches. Part II obtained insights from mock hiring committees ( $n = 290$ ) – in regards to ascribed attributes, perceptions of job fit, and hiring

recommendations - to determine how job candidates, varied by race and qualifications, are rated on becoming a head football coach within a Division I athletic program. Results, through ratings and commentary, showed qualified candidates were viewed more favorably than unqualified candidates, white candidates were viewed more favorably than black candidates, and while both white and black candidates were viewed similarly positive within their respective qualification categories, white participants were harsher on both qualified and unqualified blacks than non-white participants were. Recommendations are discussed in terms of both theoretical and practical directions for change.

## NOMENCLATURE

NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
FBS	Football Bowl Subdivision
FCS	Football Championship Subdivision
PWIHE	Predominantly White Institution of Higher Education

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*“How can we praise baseball for Jackie Robinson’s breaking of the color line without pointing out that Branch Rickey was the lone vote for integration among his peers, with quotas existing on black players for years thereafter? How can we even praise Branch Rickey, without pointing out how he consciously wrecked the Negro Leagues, the largest national black-owned business in the United States, ruthlessly harvesting its talent without compensation?”*

- Dave Zirin

I often wonder to myself while watching college football on Saturday afternoons why there are so many black players on the field, but an overwhelming majority of the thousands of fans and coaches are white. If you have not wondered the same thing, rest assured you are not alone. This reality of the black athlete and everything else white-controlled seems to be the societal “norm.” The problem, however, is this racial standard continues to hamper blacks’ progression throughout US society, and is even more elucidated in the very institution - sport – where one would suggest the most racial progress has been made.

When considering the historical and systemic nature of racism in the US (see Feagin, 2014), much more attention has been placed on economic, political, educational, and legal institutions. The institution of sport, however, tends to be overlooked. Perhaps this is the case because of its egalitarian façade that gets displayed to the public. What is

not being shown is the real racial inequality that has and continues to exist in the leadership structure of sport. Most prominent perhaps is the multi-billion dollar industry of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I collegiate sport. For instance, according to Lapchick, Agusta, Kinkopf, and McPhee's (2013) *Racial and Gender Report Card: College Athletics*, black student-athletes are overrepresented in the two most revenue-generating sports (men's basketball and football), as well as women's basketball, but their numbers are severely marginal in both NCAA front offices (e.g., vice president, managing director, administrator, support staff, conference commissioner) and in predominantly white institutions of higher education (PWIHE) athletic programs (e.g., athletic director, head coach, assistant coach). Much of the previous research has centered on the underrepresentation of blacks in coaching positions, since this has been the likely next step for many student-athletes wishing to enter the athletic profession post-participation. However, regardless of the years and efforts researchers have devoted to illuminating and putting forward strategies to elevate the position of blacks in college sport leadership, the problem of an imbalanced racial hierarchy continues to persist.

Of the primary research charted, a common problem exposed is the tendency for researchers to approach the study of black coach underrepresentation from a lens that places racial discrimination as a "potential" cause of black coach marginality or an inadvertent repercussion of work-place practices. Black coaches are severely diminished and have a historical-to-contemporary track record of being passed up in the hiring process (e.g., Hill, 2004; Singer et al., 2010), consistently directed into positions that

have minimal chance of leading to a head coach job (e.g. Bopp & Sagas, 2012; Bozeman & Faye, 2013), unsatisfied with their careers and tend to leave the job early (e.g., Cunningham, Bruening, & Straub, 2006; Cunningham & Sagas, 2004; Cunningham & Sagas, 2007), and black student-athletes are regularly exploited and perceive they will have to contend with racial discrimination once in the coaching profession (e.g., Cunningham & Singer, 2010; Kamphoff & Gill, 2008; Singer, 2005b). Thus, why would institutional racial dynamics not be at the heart of the discussion? A better approach would be to recognize racial discrimination as an entrenched societal “norm,” with findings depicting how the race problem exists in many forms, especially since current practices have not progressed in a positive way. Such a method would mean the way race and racism are viewed would have to be changed.

Besides the fact that whites have traditionally controlled every major institution in the US (e.g., political, legal, economic, education), which has been found to be preserved through important networking patterns by whites that reproduce systemic racial inequalities in employment (see DiTomaso, 2013), a primary reason for the continued domination by whites in college sport leadership is perhaps the theoretical approaches that have been applied to understanding the racial issue that exists. Such frameworks, guided by the researchers’ epistemologies, have neglected to recognize race and racism as fundamental elements needing to be the center of the discussion (Singer, 2005a). As a result, when examining the racial inequality in college athletics many of the theories utilized lack an agenda to interrogate the gatekeepers, the whites who hold the hiring decision authority, which suggests these individuals are not responsible for the

racial problems in sport leadership. The lack of application of an appropriate critical race-based theoretical framework continues the trend of diminishing the focus and severity of the race problem in sport (Oglesby and Schrader (2000), while also neglecting to recognize that sport is a functioning piece of the larger economic and political environments (Frisby, 2005). Minimizing racism and the scope of its impact sends a message that sport is a unique institution, one where its issues are independent from society at large. This is problematic since sport can be viewed as a microcosm of society, reflecting its ideals, hierarchies, and its systemic problems (see Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013).

Some researchers have recognized the need for an epistemological and theoretical change, and thus applied a critical race theoretical framework (CRT) to examine the lack of advancement of blacks in collegiate head coach positions (e.g., Agyemang & DeLorme, 2010; Singer, Harrison & Bukstein, 2010). While this theoretical advancement has been a well needed first step in the process for change, its lack of emphasis on specific white (elite) economic domination, a critical perspective in understanding white numerical overrepresentation in the multi-billion dollar institution of college sport, as well as its primary emphasis on critiquing judicial decisions and a legal system that has traditionally disempowered people of color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2005), makes this theoretical direction somewhat limiting. Thus, a theoretical framework that speaks directly to the economic enrichment of whites, especially elite whites, and economic impoverishment of blacks is needed. This study offers such a framework.

The current study introduces the systemic racism theoretical framework (Feagin, 2006) to college sport to better examine the lopsided racial leadership structure that exists within this setting. As a sociological theory, systemic racism employs a critical theoretical perspective. This seems appropriate, given “critical theorists challenge the view of those in positions of power by making changes in the oppressive and exploitive behavior within sporting contexts, to include providing opportunities for diverse populations” (Carter, 2010, p. 31).

As its name implies, systemic racism theory centers its attention on the institutionally entrenched nature of racism that has profoundly affected blacks and other people of color (e.g., Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans). When attempting to comprehend the negative position of racial and ethnic groups in the US, according to West (1994), race must be the central topic of dialogue. The overwhelming marginalization of people of color must be deeply understood if changes are to be made, and systemic racism is a unique framework geared to grasp the systemic racism issue in order to make realistic approaches to solving the inequitable position faced by racial and ethnic minorities. As a critical sociological theory built from and improved upon previous sociological theories on racial and ethnic relations, systemic racism theory seems an ideal framework to delve into the black experience in the collegiate athletic context.

Several race-based sociological theories have surfaced over the years (e.g., race relations cycle, racial formation theory, social distance, symbolic racism), but they are not without shortcomings (see Smith & Hattery, 2011). Conversely, the systemic racism

framework makes up for several of these limitations. More specifically, systemic racism theory critically and strategically illustrates deep-to-surface level, historical-to-contemporary, and society-wide links of racial oppression, through empirical facts and the application of its six primary tenets (outlined in detail in Chapter II). In addition, an important and much needed strength of systemic racism is its deliberate elucidation and interrogation of white elites, a necessity when examining power dynamics in the US. Because systemic racism theory has been employed to uncover the racial oppressive realities within the US (see Feagin, 2006, 2013, 2014), its application to American collegiate athletics seems fitting.

Guided by the systemic racism theoretical framework (Feagin, 2006), the purpose of this study is to apply a mixed-method design, divided into two different parts, to better understand racial inequality within the leadership structure of NCAA athletics. More specifically, Part I of this study is descriptive and quantitative in nature and designed to provide performance comparisons between white and black head coaches leading NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) and Division II football teams. In utilizing a causal-comparative research design, qualitatively and quantitatively, Part II is intended to obtain insights from undergraduate students (serving as a mock hiring committee) – in regards to ascribed attributes, perceptions of job fit and hiring recommendations - to determine how job candidates, varied by race and qualifications, are rated on becoming a head football coach within a Division I athletic program.

To aid in the purpose in Part I of the current study, the following exploratory questions are put forward, specifically for available data on the key years of 2012-2014:

*Question 1:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in 2013 wins?

*Question 2:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure wins?

*Question 3:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure first-year wins?

*Question 4:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure wins to reach a bowl game (playoff for FCS)?

*Question 5:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in overall number of 2013 bowl appearances (playoff for FCS and Division II)?

*Question 6:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in tenure wins?

*Question 7:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in first-year wins?

*Question 8:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in wins to reach bowl games?

*Question 9:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in final year wins?

*Question 10:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in length of tenure?

*Question 11:* How do 2012 terminated black head coaches (first and last year wins) compare to their white successors' first-year wins?

To help guide the objective of Part II of the current study, the following exploratory questions are put forward in regard to trial hiring committees:

*Question 1:* What are the potential negative attitudes held toward both black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a NCAA Division I collegiate athletic program?

*Question 2:* What are the perceptions of job fit toward black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a NCAA Division I collegiate athletic program?

*Question 3:* How would study participants (hiring committee) differentially recommend black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a NCAA Division I collegiate athletic program?

*Question 4:* What role do qualifications play on job applicant race and job-related outcomes (i.e., attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendations)?

The significance of this study's direction is multifaceted. Most importantly, putting forward a critical, race-based theoretical framework (systemic racism theory; Feagin, 2006) that has been utilized empirically to examine the black experience historically-to-contemporarily and systemically throughout US society, can encourage



researchers and leaders in sport (especially sport managers) to recognize the significance of race as a practical epistemological lens when attempting to comprehend the inequitable conditions blacks face in college sport leadership. While systemic racism theory has been applied to college sport (see Regan, Carter-Francique, & Feagin, 2014), it was put forward there to suggest it could potentially serve as a better theoretical option to examine the underrepresentation of black leadership in college athletics; however, it has yet to be applied empirically. Utilizing systemic racism theory in the current study would be the first empirical application in the college sport setting.

Additionally, although it is understood that black coaches are not proportionately represented comparable to their numbers on the field as student-athletes and to the number of coaching positions filled by whites (see Lapchick et al., 2013), a racial comparison in coaching performance has yet to be revealed. By uncovering various performances of white and black head coaches at the NCAA Division I and II levels (Part I) offers a better understanding as to how these collegiate coaches compare side-by-side, and also this new information will perhaps allow a potentially stronger argument to be made as to why blacks are undeserving of their marginal leadership placement. Such an unfortunate finding would also permit a more confident critical assessment of the numerical majority white athletic directors who do the hiring.

Furthermore, because one of the primary objectives of this study is to interrogate white decision-makers' hiring decisions, Part II of the current study allows this aim to be fulfilled. While Part I only permits an indirect questioning of gatekeepers' decision-making, Part II is designed to grant a direct probe. This is significant, given this has

never been done when examining the underrepresentation of blacks in college sport leadership. In order to receive a hiring recommendation there must be a match between an applicant and specific job (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996), and perceived attributes of potential candidates play an important, mediating role. If job fit is decided by more than just qualifications, such as perceived traits of candidates, then negative perceptions towards black applicants could result in blacks not being considered a good fit for the position. The ability to go beyond examining participants' quantitative ratings by exploring their qualitative responses, allows for a better understanding of the reasoning behind their decisions.

Because Part I of the current study is not to answer the questions of *why/how/when*, but instead *what*, a descriptive research design is used. The objective of Part I is to provide performance comparisons between white and black head coaches leading NCAA Division I (FBS and FCS) and Division II football teams. In focusing on the new (2014) FBS, FCS and Division II head coaches for the upcoming football season and the head coaches during the year (2012) when black coaches reached an all-time numerical high in the FBS allows for a broader and more vivid depiction of the white-black coach dichotomy in the collegiate athletic setting. Leading the investigation in this way sets the tone in terms of positioning this representation argument: who is in a better position to lead a NCAA college football program?

Since the only coaches/programs included in Part I at the time of data collection are those having black or white head coaches, head coaches who were head coaches the previous season, and positions that are non-vacant so the current coaches' performances

can be tracked and compared (highlighted in the exploratory questions above), the final sample analyzed comprises of 118 ( $n = 118$ ; 106 whites, 12 blacks) for 2014 FBS head coaches, 104 ( $n = 104$ ; 85 whites, 19 blacks) for 2014 FCS head coaches, and 167 ( $n = 167$ ; 137 whites, 30 blacks) Division II head coaches. Further performance comparisons are made between the fifteen black head coaches ( $n = 15$ ) during the year (2012) they reached an all-time numerical high in the FBS and the fifteen white coaches they succeeded ( $n = 15$ ). Considering this latter group of black coaches, performance comparisons (last-year and first-year wins) for those black coaches who were fired as of the end of the 2012 football season ( $n = 3$ ) are compared to the first-year wins of the white coaches who succeeded them during the 2013 football season ( $n = 3$ ). Data for coaches are retrieved from the NCAA website ([ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org)) and the various coaches' university athletic websites. Means and standard deviations are computed for all variables. Independent-samples  $t$  tests are run for all performance comparisons.

For Part II of the current study the attempt is to understand some cause (applicants' race and qualifications) and effect (ascribed attributions, perceived job fit, and hiring recommendation), and there is at least one independent variable with two or more groups being examined, thus this part uses a causal-comparative research design.

In order to determine how participants would rate (ascribe attributes, determine job fit, and recommend for hiring) qualified and unqualified black and white job candidates for a head coach position within a NCAA Division I football program, data are collected from 290 undergraduate students (serving as members on a mock hiring committee). Specifically, participants receive information on a job candidate applying

for a head football coach position (questionnaire) - the race of the applicant (black, white) and the qualifications the candidate possesses (high, low) is varied - which includes a series of Likert-type scale questions on the ascription of attributes, job fit and hiring recommendation, as well as spaces for responses after each series of questions for participants to elaborate on their answer choices. Means and standard deviations are computed for all variables. For the objectives of the study, testing is executed by way of a  $2$  (race: black, white)  $\times$   $2$  (qualification level: high qualifications, low qualifications) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), with applicant “similarity to self” serving as a control variable and attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendations serving as the dependent variables.

Like other research studies, the current study is not without limitations. One potential drawback of Part I is the assumption that the race of the athletic director is white. For instance, the current study interrogates white gatekeepers as the source of hiring and firing black coaches at the various levels (i.e., Division I and II) within NCAA collegiate athletic programs. This perhaps suggests that non-white athletic directors serve no role in such decision-making. Without doing a more extensive examination of athletic directors and their tenures, which the current study does not do, it is not possible to say for certain that white athletic directors are the sole decision-makers in determining the fate of black coaches. However, considering the latest statistics put forward by Lapchick et al. (2013), white athletic directors are overrepresented in both Division I (90.0%) and Division II (90.9%) collegiate athletic programs. These numbers demonstrate that white athletic directors play a substantial role

in the hiring and firing of head coaches, and thus interrogation of their role as gatekeepers in the outcome of black coaches in the current study is seemingly justified.

Another potential limitation is the use of college students as members of a mock hiring committee in Part II of the current study. This sample is reasonable for the purpose at hand, but one of convenience and it does not represent that of a real hiring committee. Racially, the committee is conceivably ideal; however, these participants are still in school, and several may not have been fully acquainted with hiring processes and/or familiar with college football. Although this can be seen as a weakness, one of the primary objectives of interrogating white decision-makers on how race and qualifications play a role in their hiring decisions is satisfied. If findings are shown to be in line with those demonstrated in a variety of non-sport settings, that will make this study a potential first step in better understanding how racialized decision-making by hiring committees could play out in a real sport setting.

### **Definitions of Terms**

This section provides definitions of various terms (and acronyms of terms) that are important throughout the current study. Because many of these terms (i.e., NCAA, NCAA Division I FBS and FCS, Division II) are names associated with the sport institution the current research is critiquing and are perhaps unfamiliar to those who do not follow college athletics closely, the information defining these terms are retrieved (and quoted) directly from the institution's website. Because other terms used throughout the study (i.e., PWIHE, gatekeepers) provide the context of the current

research and can have various meanings, respectively, they are also defined in this section.

### *NCAA*

“The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a membership-driven organization dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of student-athletes and equipping them with the skills to succeed on the playing field, in the classroom and throughout life.

We support learning through sports by integrating athletics and higher education to enrich the college experience of student-athletes. NCAA members – mostly colleges and universities, but also conferences and affiliated groups – work together to create the framework of rules for fair and safe competition.

Those rules are administered by NCAA national office staff, which also organizes national championships and provides other resources to support student-athletes and the schools they attend. The NCAA membership and national office work together to help more than 450,000 student-athletes develop their leadership, confidence, discipline and teamwork through college sports” ([ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org)).

### *NCAA Division I FBS and FCS*

“Among the three NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletics budgets and offer the most generous number of scholarships. Schools who are members of Division I commit to maintaining a high academic standard for student-athletes in addition to a wide range of opportunities for athletics participation.

With nearly 350 colleges and universities in its membership, Division I schools field more than 6,000 athletic teams, providing opportunities for more than 170,000 student-athletes to compete in NCAA sports each year.

Division I is subdivided based on football sponsorship. Schools that participate in bowl games belong to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) [formerly known as Division I-A]. Those that participate in the NCAA-run football championship belong to the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) [formerly known as Division I-AA]. A third group doesn't sponsor football at all. The subdivisions apply only to football; all other sports are considered simply Division I" (ncaa.org).

There are currently thirty-nine FBS bowl games, allowing seventy-eight teams to compete in the post-season; six of the bowl games, however, are designated for the top twelve teams to allow for the crowning of a national champion. The FCS utilizes a playoff structure leading to a national championship. The top twenty-four ranked teams within the FCS are invited to compete in the post-season playoff tournament in order to crown a national champion (ncaa.org).

### *NCAA Division II*

"Division II is a collection of almost 300 colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level of scholarship athletics while exceling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience. This balance, in which student-athletes are recognized for their academic success, athletics contributions, and campus and community involvement, is at the heart of the Division II philosophy.

The Division II approach provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletics competition and a focus on service to the community. The balance and integration of these different areas of learning provide Division II student-athletes with a path to graduation while cultivating a variety of skills and knowledge for life after college” (ncaa.org).

Similar to the FCS, the top twenty-four ranked football programs within Division II are invited to compete in a post-season playoff tournament in order to crown a national champion (ncaa.org).

### *PWIHE*

Predominantly white institutions of higher education (PWIHE) are the institutions critiqued throughout this study, and are not to be confused with those institutions referred to as historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). HBCUs are two- and four year postsecondary educational institutions, which were created prior to 1964 to serve the black community (“Historically Black Colleges,” 1991). Because these institutions comprise of a majority black population, the sport leadership structure does not have a racially inequitable system in place; athletes, coaches, and administrators are proportionally black. PWIHE, on the other hand, are those colleges and universities having majority white populations, and their sport leadership structures are racially inequitable since black student-athletes are overrepresented while assistant coaches, head coaches, and athletic directors are a majority white (Lapchick et al., 2013).

Distinguishing between these two types of institutions is important, given the student-athlete racial make-up in the most revenue-generating sports (football, men’s and



women's basketball) are similar but their leadership structures are racially opposite. Throughout this study, the discussion on racial discrimination in the leadership structure of NCAA college athletics is centering the focus on PWIHE, since separating the two illustrates a more realistic picture of the racial inequality that exists.

### *Gatekeepers*

In the context of the current study, “gatekeepers” is used throughout and refers to those powerful whites who hold institutional power and thus have hiring and firing decision-making control. Because many whites are entrusted to perform similar tasks (e.g., hiring committees; human resource recruiters, resume screeners), or serve as barriers between applicants and the individual who will perhaps make the final hiring decision, these same individuals are also referred to as gatekeepers (Mitchell, 2003).

The remainder of this paper will outline a detailed review of the literature on the underrepresentation of black coaches at the collegiate level of athletics, inferences from the review, and the theoretical framework which will guide the current study (Chapter II); the methods utilized to help answer the exploratory questions put forward (Chapter III); a summarization of the results (Chapter IV); and a thorough discussion and interpretation of the findings, including limitations and theoretical and practical recommendations for change (Chapter V).

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW<sup>\*</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a review of literature that covers the primary scholarly research on the underrepresentation of black coaches in college athletics. This is an important endeavor, since much research in this area has documented the issue but the problem persists. In order to find appropriate solutions to remedy the dearth of black coaches it becomes necessary to review the literature on the topic to uncover potential gaps needing to be filled, weaknesses to be strengthened, and strengths that perhaps should be further developed. In addition to describing and critiquing the literature, this chapter offers inferences of the review and the theoretical framework that will guide the remainder of this study.

Although the date range for the literature search was left open, the oldest research dated back approximately forty years, and only five articles/books were found and used that dated beyond thirteen years. The scarcity in the literature is because the reality of black leadership in college athletics in PWIHE is a fairly recent phenomenon. The main databases utilized in the search for literature were “SportDiscus,” “Sociological Abstracts,” “Academic Search Complete,” “Sociology: A Sage Full-text Collection,” “Social Science Full Text,” and “Google Scholar.” The primary key words used during the search were African American coaches, black coaches, sport leadership,

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<sup>\*</sup> Part of this chapter is reprinted with permission from “Systemic Racism Theory: Critically Examining College Sport Leadership”, by M. Regan, A. Carter-Francique, & J. R. Feagin, 2014. In L. T. Martin (Ed.), *Out of Bounds: Racism and the Black Athlete* (pp. 26-53). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers. Copyright 2014 by Lori Latrice Martin.

college athletics, college football, college basketball, underrepresentation, discrimination, racism, white privilege, and diversity, which were all mixed and matched to form optimal search criteria to fit the purpose of the study (e.g., African American + college athletics + underrepresentation).

This chapter is divided into five primary headings: a) Black Athlete Integration: What about the Black Coaches?, b) Barriers to Entry and Advancement, c) Tackling Coach Inequality?, d) Inferences, and e) Theoretical Framework for the Forthcoming Study.

### **Black Athlete Integration: What about the Black Coaches?**

There was a time during the nineteenth century when blacks played and were welcomed to participate in various sports (e.g., baseball, boxing, golf, hockey, horseracing, tennis) on a national level (Wiggins, 2007). However, due to a rise in world-wide imperialism, social Darwinism, and the spread of scientific racism, an inferior framing clouded over blacks throughout US society causing their acceptance in sport to be short lived (e.g., Feagin, 2013; Miller, 1998; Wiggins, 2007). Among other things, the departure of blacks in sport resulted in an economic shift in favor of whites. In some sports this racial and economic shift was very pronounced. This was especially the case for blacks as jockeys, a role blacks filled and numerically dominated for many years, but was taken over by whites (Rhoden, 2006). Eventually, though, blacks found a way to thrive in sport.

Although white decision-makers excluded most blacks from organized sport participation, few outstanding black athletes participated and succeeded in professional

boxing, Olympic competition, and athletics in PWIHE during the first half of the twentieth century. Blacks also thrived in their own all-black professional sport leagues, colleges and universities, and high schools. However, the economically prospering all-black athletic leagues had crumbled by mid-century because of extensive racial integration in professional, college, and high school sport (e.g., Rhoden, 2006; Wiggins, 2007). While racial integration improved the opportunities for black sport participation on a large scale, this was not the case for black leaders in sport (e.g., owners, managers, athletic directors, coaches). As Rhoden (2006) suggests “The key to the ultimate appeal of integration for white coaches was that it would not mean a corresponding loss of power; in essence, whites could have their cake and eat it, too” (p. 139). Unfortunately, this remains a pertinent issue in sport today.

This pattern continues to exist at the various levels of sport, but it is the collegiate level that exhibits the slowest progression in equitable positioning of blacks as athletic leaders. This is most noticeable considering of the 381 Division I FBS head football coaching vacancies over a twenty-two year span (1982-2004), blacks filled only nineteen of those positions (Hill, 2004). If this is surprising, the latest numbers will be even more startling. Lapchick et al.’s (2013) *The 2012 Racial and Gender Report Card: College Sport* elucidates this depressing reality. According to the latest report card, blacks continue to be marginally represented in all decision-making positions in both NCAA offices and collegiate athletic departments on PWIHE campuses. This is especially illuminated in key leadership positions closely linked to the playing fields and courts (i.e., head coach, assistance coach) in NCAA athletic programs. For instance,

Division I athletics show black (male and female) head coaches are marginally represented leading men's teams (8.2%) and women's teams (7.9%); similarly, black (male and female) assistant coaches are marginally represented leading men's teams (18.2%) and women's teams (14.1%).

The numbers are even more problematic in the two sports (men's basketball and football) in NCAA Division I college athletics where black student-athletes are overly represented and where the most revenue is generated. For instance, black male student-athletes comprise 57.2% and 43.2% for Division I men's basketball and football, respectively; however, black male head coaches for men's basketball and football are represented at 18.6% and 11.3%, respectively, and black male assistant coaches at 39.0% and 25.7%, respectively (Lapchick et al., 2013). These figures demonstrate blacks are overrepresented on the fields and courts of play and excessively underrepresented in positions of leadership.

Interestingly, black females are experiencing the same numerical marginalization at the hands of both white males and females in the leadership structure (i.e., assistant coach, head coach) of the sport where black female student-athletes are the numerical majority, namely women's basketball. For instance, according to Lapchick et al. (2013), black female student-athletes (47.9%) outnumber white female student-athletes (38.2%) in women's NCAA Division I basketball; however, as assistant coaches, white females (38.4%) outnumber black females (24.9%), and the gap increases at the head coaching ranks (50.0% and 10.4%, respectively). While women as a whole continue to be numerically marginalized in the leadership ranks (e.g., assistant coach, head coach) by

white men in women's sports (e.g., Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Lapchick et al., 2013), white women are overrepresented in coaching positions where black females seem to be, at least numerically, in a better position to fill.

One final statistic should explicate a white hierarchy taking place within the collegiate athletic setting, the position pertaining to the highest leadership rank: athletic director. According to Lapchick et al. (2013), within NCAA Division I athletic departments white males currently hold a numerical majority of the athletic director roles (82.1%), followed by white females (6.9%), then black males (6.3%), and finally black females who are not represented at all. These numbers indicate that not only do white males hold a majority of the leadership posts and white males and females are concentrated at the top of the leadership ladder, but a racial hierarchy exists that can potentially make it more difficult for blacks to maneuver upward.

The historical experiences of blacks in the US and how these experiences play out in sport show the realistic picture of sport as being yet just another institution where blacks are marginalized. The same conditions under which blacks have been subordinated to whites are clearly being played out today. Maybe the acts of racial discrimination are not as overt as they once were, but the actions and outcomes of white domination, especially in the economic domain, are very present today as they were in the past. Allowing black student-athletes to be overrepresented on the sport fields and courts on PWIHE campuses may seem progressive, but taking a deeper look shows an inequitable sharing of the financial resources among those who lead these athletes and run the prestigious and lucrative college athletic programs.

What is surprising is the fact that racial inequality in sport has existed for many years, and regardless of how much is discussed about it, change has been stagnant. Perhaps one of the reasons for the lack of progress is the way the race problem in sport has been approached. Certainly there has been an abundant amount of research on the subject, but the message has not yet appealed to the change-makers to take action on this unfortunate reality. For the next few sections a review of black underrepresentation in the college sport context will be outlined. The goal is to not only briefly describe what has been uncovered, but to potentially point out what may be causing the lack of black advancement.

### **Barriers to Entry and Advancement**

#### *Negative Framing Affecting Leadership Trajectories*

The previous section illustrated the short-lived acceptance of blacks in many sports (e.g., horseracing, tennis, boxing, golf, hockey) during the nineteenth century, due to an inferior framing that took hold throughout US society (see Feagin, 2013; Miller, 1998; Wiggins, 2007). Scientific racism, however, is one very useful perspective to perhaps better understand black numerical marginalization in sport leadership.

Interestingly, while whites utilized science to claim black inferiority, they employed pseudoscience again to explain black athletic prowess once blacks began to discredit scientific thought by exceling and surpassing whites athletically (e.g., Marqusee, 2003; Miller, 1998; Mosley, 2003). First blacks were deemed born physically inferior to whites, then the new rational was they were born with “natural” athletic ability (e.g., Marqusee, 2003; Mosley, 2003). Such framing by whites served as a means

to discredit the work ethic of blacks, while simultaneously positioning blacks as solely athletic, short of any other positive characteristics (e.g., intellect). This eventually led to the notion of “stacking,” or positioning of players to central or non-central positions on the field based on race and/or ethnicity (see Smith & Henderson, 2000).

Whites have traditionally placed themselves in more central positions, positions associated with greater leadership, intelligence, and interaction; and blacks have been situated in more peripheral positions, which are linked to less leadership, greater athletic ability, and minimal interaction. Brooks and Althouse (2000) show there is a correlation between those higher up in the leadership ranks (e.g., head coach, athletic director) and their past playing position. In particular, prestigious sport jobs are generally acquired by those who have played more central positions (e.g., quarterback in football, pitcher in baseball); thus, because blacks more often are relegated to peripheral positions (e.g., wide-receiver in football, outfield in baseball) which, supposedly, require less intelligence, leadership, and interaction, blacks are often framed by the mostly white gatekeepers as less qualified to enter leadership positions beyond the playing field.

This correlation illustrated by Brookes and Althouse (2000) has been shown to be validated in a more recent study. For instance, in utilizing the channeling hypothesis, Bozeman and Faye (2013) illustrate the lack of minority head coaches on NCAA Division I FBS teams is indicative of past playing position, and thus the eventual assistant coach positions these athletes occupy. Bozeman and Faye show that the head coach position is usually filled by those occupying the coordinator position, a role typically filled by past playing positions and assistant coach positions dominated by



whites (e.g., offensive lineman, linebacker, and quarterback); whereas the non-central playing positions and assistant coach positions where minorities are overrepresented (e.g., running back, defensive back) typically do not lead to the coordinator position or a direct trajectory to the head coach position.

Similarly, Bopp and Sagas (2012) highlight that although black representation as head coach (and defensive coordinator) on NCAA Division I FBS teams have modestly increased from three to thirteen (out of 120 head coach jobs) from 2005 to 2010, their numbers have decreased as quarterback coach, offensive linemen coach and offensive coordinator, the primary pipeline positions to the head coach job. During the same time period black coach representation of non-central playing positions has either increased (defensive back and safety) or remained somewhat steady (wide receiver and running back), coaching positions overrepresented by blacks and a marginal trajectory to coordinator and head coach positions. Thus, their findings support the presence of both access and institutional discrimination.

The literature above highlights an interesting perspective on the existence of racial discrimination in NCAA Division I collegiate athletics. Both the “stacking” and “channeling hypothesis” offer a deeper understanding into how the positions athletes play dictate their future coaching trajectories. The assumption, it seems, is that blacks are being discriminated against because of the positions they play not because they are black. If this is the case, this begs the question, what if the predominant positions filled by blacks eventually shifted and were filled by whites. According to the above assumptions, these *new* whites will be the victims of discrimination on their journeys to

becoming head coach. Because the major problem faced in head coach hiring is a disproportionate number of whites being hired over blacks, then it would not make sense, and not be very realistic, that the institution of college sport would start institutional discriminatory practices against a group that has been privileged from the very beginning of its existence. Is it possible that blacks are being racially excluded from leadership posts in college athletics for being black, and the positions they have been channeled into is of secondary concern? If it is recognized that black (and other people of color) underrepresentation is a reality in leadership in all major institutional contexts (e.g., political, economic, education, legal; Feagin, 2014), then it is not too far-fetched to assume that racial hiring practices in sport prevent black advancement, regardless of past playing and coaching position.

Maybe the attention should be placed on the athletic director, a position that is almost ninety percent white and the individual who does the hiring of head coaches in the collegiate athletic setting. Based on these numbers and the fact that whites excessively dominate the college coaching ranks, I would argue a more sensible and stronger correlation would be found comparing the race of the athletic director and coach than comparing coaching trajectories and past playing position. Perhaps an even more logical next step would be to study these whites' views and everyday practices. Not to take away from the important work highlighted above, but placing more attention on those who hold the power and make a vast majority of the decisions could conceivably expose why whites continue to racially frame blacks as not being suitable for certain positions as athletes and as athletic leaders.

### *Coach Perceptions in Discriminatory Environments*

The statistics above indicate discrimination based on race is real, but it can be perceptual as well. For instance, building on the treatment discrimination framework, Cunningham and Sagas (2004) demonstrate when racial minorities in the collegiate coaching profession felt the presence of treatment discrimination, their perceived opportunity for advancement was low, their level of career satisfaction was low, and their occupational turnover intent was high. Similarly, Cunningham, Bruening, and Straub (2006) show both perceived access and treatment discrimination felt by black collegiate basketball and football assistant coaches led to greater occupational turnover intent. Additionally, in taking an institutional theory perspective, Cunningham, Sagas, and Ashley (2001) find that although black coaches' occupational commitment was high, their occupational turnover intent was also high. Cunningham et al. (2001) suggest the presence of discriminatory perceptions may have potentially mediated this outcome. Furthermore, Cunningham and Sagas (2007) show the continued presence of treatment discrimination in coaching is a leading cause as to why blacks choose to leave the profession. In echoing this judgment, Brooks and Althouse (2000) assert the shortage of black numbers and persistent white advancement in sport leadership lead to blacks feeling a lack of belonging. Brooks and Althouse (2000) also argue that the perception by blacks of not fitting in results in decreased amounts of social interaction, mentoring, and overall networking, which are key ingredients for entering and enhancing maneuverability beyond the lower ranks of sport leadership. In several other studies, the presence of discrimination (e.g., Sagas & Cunningham, 2005) and/or socially held

stereotypes with discrimination (e.g., Sartore & Cunningham, 2006) is found to play an important role in racial differences in the career trajectory of collegiate coaches.

These findings indicate various forms of discrimination have a negative impact on the career experiences and outcomes of black collegiate coaches. These understandings point to a problem that has been evident, but has yet to be resolved. Given the abundant amount of research demonstrating similar findings, why are black coaches continuing to be adversely affected in their careers? It seems the problem lies in the lens researchers are viewing racial inequality through and the theoretical frameworks offered to investigate the black experience, which effectively distorts the extent of the racial dilemma.

A common theme that continues to surface in the research that uncovers racial discrimination in sport leadership is the passiveness in pointing out the perpetrators who cause an overwhelming majority of these concerns. If the athletic directors, head coaches, assistant coaches, and administrative staff in college athletics are majority white and black coaches are indicating they experience discrimination in their work environments, then why is the multitude of research agendas absent of a critique of “whiteness?” Maybe I am missing something, but if the instigators of racial inequality and the consequences of their actions are well known, then why are they left out of the conversation? Consequences and victims of discrimination can be underscored repeatedly, but how can the problem even begin to be tackled if those causing them are not interrogated. It seems the racial hierarchy is not only being protected within the college sport setting, but consciously or unconsciously is extended to those who are

examining the environment as well. Perhaps this is why the theoretical frameworks utilized never illuminate a thorough picture of the racial reality.

Theoretical frameworks put forward to examine the black experience are repeatedly absent of a direct connection with race. While the frameworks utilized have revealed important implications of discrimination, how impactful can the findings be when the same theories can be used with any other group experiencing similar predicaments? This implies racial inequality is no different than any other form of inequality. Such a belief overlooks the historical conditions of institutional and systemic racism such as slavery and legal segregation, and the continuous concerns of housing segregation, discrimination in employment, obstacles in education, disparities in healthcare, barriers in business, and the many environmental health concerns that disproportionately affect people of color (see Farkas, 2003; Laveist, 1993; Feagin, 2014; Mong & Roscigno, 2010). Not investigating the problems facing racial minorities with a race-based theoretical framework does not allow for a historical-to-contemporary and society-wide examination. This absence not only places the black experience in coaching on the same level as all other groups, but it also suggests racial issues in sport are unique and disconnected from the broader society.

#### *Black Student-Athletes: Aware of Racial Disadvantage*

Utilizing the colonialism model, Hawkins (2001) argues the white power structure of NCAA Division I PWIHE “operate as colonizers who prey on the athletic prowess of young black males, recruit them from black communities, exploit their athletic talents, and discard them once they are injured or their eligibility is exhausted”

(p. 1). Hawkins makes this claim since the notion of colonialism - political, economic and racial exploitation - fits the experiences of black student-athletes on these college campuses. For instance, this reality can be seen through a lack of policy that perpetuates inadequate academic preparation, guidance, and mentorship; the generating of billions of dollars in revenue from the labor of student-athletes, while simultaneously refusing to compensate them; and the suffering from racist stereotypes, discrimination from coaches and athletic departments, as well as unacceptable graduation rates that disproportionately affect black student-athletes (e.g., Eitzen, 2000; Hawkins, 2001; Lapchick, 2003). Several researchers (e.g., Donnor, 2005; Edwards, 1973; Hawkins, 2001) contend the economic benefits gained by whites are the only reason black student-athletes are recruited in the first place, which allows these adverse conditions to continue unchanged.

This mistreatment has an even more profound effect when these same black student-athletes contemplate their future professional endeavors as coaches. For instance, in applying critical race theory (CRT) while conducting interviews with black male collegiate football players, Singer (2005b) discovers that these players perceive the existence of racial discrimination in sport would have an adverse effect on the future acquisition of coaching and other decision-making positions at the collegiate and professional levels of sport. In an attempt to understand the dearth of minorities in the coaching profession, Kamphoff and Gill (2008) find, when compared to whites, black male and female student-athletes agreed they thought they would experience racial discrimination as coaches. Moreover, Cunningham (2003) shows that although black student-athletes intended to join the coaching ranks as a career path, they perceived less

opportunity in career advancement than their white counterparts, thus supporting the “glass ceiling” model. Similarly, in applying social cognitive career theory, Cunningham and Singer (2010) reveal, when compared to whites, racial minorities expect to experience negative stereotypes and discrimination once in their coaching careers.

Setting the tone in this section Hawkins (2001) demonstrates that perspectives on discrimination from black student-athletes are essential, since these individuals are in the “trenches” on a daily basis. Hawkins’ application of the colonial model on the black experience on PWIHE college campuses paints a vivid picture of the realities faced by black athletes at the NCAA Division I level. In the modern era, it would be difficult to find a comparable situation in the US in which blacks are exploited at the magnitude in which they are in this particular context. These struggles illustrate why blacks face racial inequality later down the line for those who enter the coaching profession; from the outset these individuals are mistreated politically, financially, educationally, and racially, and they become aware that their experiences are much different than those of whites. This was confirmed in the several works within this section. It was unanimous, when compared to whites, racial minorities, both male and female, felt they would experience discrimination and/or stereotypes if they attempted to enter or once they were in the coaching profession. These findings speak volumes to the racial concerns within the collegiate athletic setting, and definitely give an unfortunate and realistic depiction of the costs and burdens endured by blacks as athletes and those who enter the profession beyond participation.

Recent events show that many collegiate student-athletes are fed up with being exploited. For instance, Northwestern's scholarship football players voted and certified the first union in college sports. The election was ordered by a National Labor Relations Board official, who "ruled that Northwestern's scholarship football players were employees, meaning that they, like other workers, had the right to form a union and that they could be entitled to workers' compensation benefits, unemployment insurance and some portion of the revenue generated by college sports" (Strauss, 2014). One black student-athlete from another PWIHE (Shabazz Napier), a supporter of unions in college athletics, complained that the NCAA brings in millions of dollars and he regularly goes to sleep at night hungry (Ganim, 2014). Interestingly, because of all the negative attention being targeted at the NCAA, the governing body ruled that all NCAA-sponsored universities provide their student-athletes unlimited meals (Trahan, 2014). Although some of these current events suggest progress is being made for the betterment of the black student-athlete condition, the future outlook (beyond participation) continues to appear bleak.

### **Tackling Coach Inequality?**

#### *Barriers to Change*

What is troubling is that some forty years ago Edwards (1973) doggedly articulated the realities of the race problem in sport and today we are still trying to come to grips with its existence, suggesting racial discrimination is not just tacked onto an otherwise already healthy system. Furthermore, Anderson (1993) exposed the realities of institutional discrimination in NCAA Division I athletics, where she indicated the



pattern of underrepresented blacks in leadership positions (i.e., athletic directors, head coaches, assistant coaches, coordinators) will continue unless intervened upon.

Over ten years later, sport management researchers have stepped up to the plate and made their appeals to the inequities in sport. For instance, Frisby (2005) suggests viewing sport organizations as part of the larger cultural, political, and economic environments is the only way researchers can truly challenge the dominant white power structure, since this domination is historically grounded and wide-spread. Echoing this sentiment, Singer (2005a) adds this is especially important “when studying and conducting research with individuals from racial and ethnic groups that have historically been marginalized (e.g., blacks) in Western civilization” (p. 464), since these individuals have been historically and systemically adversely affected most. Moreover, Cunningham (2010) contends in order to completely comprehend the complexity and tackle racial discrimination in collegiate sport leadership, the problem has to be viewed and approached at all levels of inquiry: micro, meso, and macro. Even with these appeals for change, in order to have a true impact in equalizing the leadership structure whites will have to play a significant role if real change is expected to occur.

Oglesby and Schrader (2000) submit the reluctance of influential whites to admit that a race problem exists in sport serves as a primary barrier to equalizing the sport leadership structure. They argue various factors contribute to white inaction: white privilege, “color-blindness,” as well as the refusal to depreciate their position of power to elevate others’ when they do recognize the existence of racial inequality. Oglesby and Schrader further contend that when some whites do decide to take a stance to tackle

racial discriminatory practices, the tendency is to reduce the severity of the problem; minimizing the institutional reality of racism to an individual concern (i.e., prejudice). Ladson-Billings and Donnor (2005) maintain that if we are to rid racism in sport, researchers should see the problem for what it is and take a more active role in combating this enduring dilemma.

What makes the black struggle in gaining an equal footing in sport leadership even more problematic is the fact that many of those who make the final hiring decisions (i.e., athletic director) perceive employment opportunities to be equal for blacks (Tabron, 2004). Given that blacks suffer tremendously in accessing head coach jobs suggests, similar to DiTomaso's (2013) findings in other employment sectors, perhaps whites do not consider their utilization of social networks to reproduce whites counts as unequal employment opportunity for blacks.

#### *Coaches and Researchers Taking Steps*

Since the research has not done much to provoke real change, black coaches are finding ways to improve their situation. For instance, in employing the homologous reproduction, self-categorization and access discrimination frameworks, Cunningham and Sagas (2005) find black head basketball coaches in NCAA Division I athletic programs are more likely to have a greater number of black assistant coaches on staff than white head coaches (a similar case is found for white head-assistant coach proportions). Although the proportion of black assistant coaches is significantly lower than the proportion of potential black coaches, these finding demonstrate blacks are utilizing their roles as decision-makers to increase overall skilled black numbers in

collegiate sport leadership positions. While whites still control a majority of head coach roles and white reproduction persists, as blacks continue to elevate their decision-making authority by status and numbers they are also resisting the systemic nature of racial discrimination by placing more blacks in positions of power. These findings may show there are steps being taken to increase black numbers in college coaching, but just as many of the other studies introduced above, these advances are not a result of the research.

While the outcomes in the work by Cunningham and Sagas (2005) are promising – black coach reproduction – the approach and interpretations of such findings do not adequately speak to the key issue at hand. Firstly, the theoretical frameworks put forward do not illustrate that the racial problem in college sport is an institutional concern that permeates all aspects of society. Certainly one can infer that the concerns in college coach hiring can be expanded to include other societal institutions when discussing hiring practices, but utilizing theories at the meso level of analysis and below when discussing race assumes that perhaps one institution may uncover different findings than the other. Research has clearly demonstrated blacks are underrepresented in top decision-making positions in every major institution (e.g., economic, education, political, legal; Feagin, 2014), and because sport represents a very important microcosm of society (e.g., Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013), the problems in sport should be researched and findings interpreted in the broader societal context (Frisby, 2005).

Additionally, utilizing theoretical frameworks that do not speak directly to race, but instead can be applied to any other group where hiring practices are concerned

suggests the problems blacks have to contend with are no different than the problems of others. This is disconcerting, considering no group in the US has had to go through over 240 years of slavery, almost another hundred years of legal segregation, and continue to face racial discrimination systemically throughout society, overtly and covertly. Because of this historical and contemporary black reality, epistemological lenses and frameworks put forward when researching the conditions blacks relentlessly endure must center around race if the message is to be clear and real change is to occur.

Some researchers in sport have attempted to draw attention to the race problem in sport leadership by arguing that racial discrimination in college athletics has to be viewed and approached differently if change is to occur. For instance, Singer et al. (2010) utilize the primary tenets of CRT to examine the five grading criteria of the Black Coaches & Administrators (BCA) Hiring Report Card (HRC) (see Harrison & Yee, 2009). Because of the low grade on the HRC, suggesting the continued access discrimination leading to the continued underrepresentation of black head coaches in NCAA college athletics, Singer et al. argue CRT not only justifies the notion of the HRC but the outcome of the examination places PWIHE's hiring process under public scrutiny. Similarly, Agyemang and DeLorme (2010) situate CRT and social dominance theory (SDT) as a model to better scrutinize the dearth of black head coaches on NCAA Division I FBS teams. Like Singer et al., Agyemang and DeLorme contend that CRT is an ideal theory to investigate racial discrimination in college coaching because it places race and racism at the center of the discussion. The authors include SDT in the

conversation, since this perspective sheds light on the economic inequality in college sport, which is indicative of the existence of a racial hierarchy.

Singer et al. (2010) and Agyemang and DeLorme (2010) both advance CRT and CRT with SDT, respectively, to critically examine the slow progression for equal racial representation in NCAA Division I FBS athletic programs. CRT has certainly been the first important step in the right direction for truly understanding the underrepresentation of black coaches at the highest level of college athletics. Yet, in order to get to the root of the problem, CRT is somewhat limiting in this endeavor. It is a fact that CRT positions “race” at the center of discussion and critiques “whiteness” as the optimal criterion, crosses epistemological boundaries, reinterprets civil rights laws, challenges dominant legal claims (e.g., meritocracy, objectivity, color-blindness) and maintains a contextual/historical examination of the law, as Singer (2005a; 2005b; 2010) argues and demonstrates. However, when interviewed on CNN’s Soledad O’Brien show, Emory Law Professor Dorothy Brown claims that “Critical race theory seeks to explain judicial decisions by asking the questions, What does race have to do with it?” Furthermore, the founder of CRT, Derrick Bell, argues that CRT is “an orientation around race that seeks to attack a legal system which disempowers people of color” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2005). Although brief, what is common among these well-known advocates of CRT is CRT’s primary application is to confront a US legal system which continues to subordinate people of color. For this reason if CRT is to be successfully used in an institutional setting such as sport, then it must be applied to critique all the written and unwritten rules, policies, etc. that are enacted to elevate the position of whites and lower

the position of people of color. Not surprisingly, the inequality being experienced by blacks in college coaching are frequently unwritten rules, rules systemic within every major institution and unable to be directly analyzed. Perhaps this is the reason why whites have been able to get away with racial discrimination in sport leadership for so long, because they are *not breaking any laws*.

It is also important to note that CRT does not consider specifically white (elite) economic domination, a critical perspective in understanding white numerical overrepresentation in the multi-billion dollar institution of college sport. This is an important component to be considered when attending to the underrepresentation of blacks in sport leadership, since the objective of getting more black coaches in the leadership ranks is for them to get a share of the wealth. This shortcoming of CRT has been acknowledged by Agyemang and DeLorme (2010), since these authors included SDT in their examination of black coach numerical marginality to explain the racial hierarchy created by whites in order to reap the bulk of the financial rewards. Because of these limitations of the CRT framework, a theoretical framework that speaks directly to the economic enrichment of whites and economic impoverishment of blacks is needed.

### **Inferences**

The above review of literature highlights the problem of racial discrimination in hiring practices and experiences of blacks in the college coaching context. Of the research outlined, a common problem exposed is the tendency for researchers to approach the study of black coach underrepresentation from a lens that places racial discrimination as a “potential” cause of black coach marginality or an inadvertent

repercussion of work-place practices. When black coaches are severely diminished and have a historical-to-contemporary track record of being passed up in the hiring process (e.g., Hill, 2004; Singer et al., 2010), consistently directed into positions that have minimal chance of leading to a head coach job (e.g. Bopp & Sagas, 2012; Bozeman & Faye, 2013), unsatisfied with their careers and tend to leave the job early (e.g., Cunningham, Bruening, & Straub, 2006; Cunningham & Sagas, 2004; Cunningham & Sagas, 2007), and black student-athletes are regularly exploited and perceive they would have to contend with racial discrimination once in the coaching profession (Cunningham & Singer, 2010; Kamphoff & Gill, 2008; Singer, 2005b), why would institutional racial dynamics not be at the heart of the discussion. A better approach would be to recognize racial discrimination as an entrenched societal “norm,” with findings depicting how the race problem exists in many forms, especially since current practices have not progressed in a positive way. However, such a method would mean the way race and racism are viewed would have to be changed.

As researchers contend in order to truly tackle the problems blacks face in collegiate athletics, epistemological lenses have to place race and racism at the core of examination (Singer, 2005a); to recognize the entrenched and systemic nature of its institutional problems, sport should be located in a broader societal context (Frisby, 2005); and a connection of micro-to-macro understandings is the only way to uncover the fullness of the race problem (Cunningham, 2010). From the above review, it is apparent such a thorough picture has yet to be exposed. Furthermore, there is a reluctance among researchers to interrogate the whites who control the institution of

sport and make the hiring decisions, which suggests these individuals are not responsible for the racial problems in sport leadership. A primary reason for these shortcomings is the frameworks that have been utilized lack the tools necessary to investigate racism in sport in a comprehensive way.

While several researchers have attempted to highlight the black predicament in college sport leadership, their theoretical approaches have been limiting in elucidating the true institutional racial dilemma. One of the primary concerns is many of these theories are not race-based frameworks, which cannot even begin to speak to the racism blacks have to endure throughout US society. Additionally, these theories are not developed to interrogate white elites, an important endeavor considering whites numerically control sport leadership and thus are the primary hiring authority. Furthermore, attending to the historical-to-contemporary and society-wide understanding of the race problem is of little concern, which indicates most of these theories serve only to gloss over the issues black have to contend with. Based on the persistence of racial discrimination in college sport, the time has arrived to revise the way the problem is being investigated. The theory of systemic racism (Feagin, 2006) offers this change to fill the voids of previous research agendas.

Through its six primary tenets – whites' unjust enrichment, blacks' unjust impoverishment; racial hierarchy with divergent group interests; social reproduction and alienation; the white racial frame; extraordinary costs and burdens of racism; and resisting systemic racism – along with “white economic domination” strategically placed in the center of the framework, systemic racism, unlike any other theory, can grasp the



full complexity of the race problem in college athletics. Several other sociological theories concerning race relations have surfaced over the years (e.g., race relations cycle, racial formation theory, social distance, symbolic racism), but they are not without important limitations (see Smith & Hattery, 2011). Conversely, the systemic racism framework makes up for several of these deficiencies. The next section will describe systemic racism theory in more detail.

### **Theoretical Framework for the Forthcoming Study**

#### *Systemic Racism Theory*

According to Ladson-Billings (2000), knowing and understanding the world is linked to the conditions in which one lives and learns. Ladson-Billings contends such knowledge is a dominant worldview (i.e., Eurocentric) disseminated by society's social structures and the relationships between them, designed to be internalized and taken as the standard. In scholarly endeavors this has had racially biased implications.

Considering academic scholarship, researchers (e.g., Scheurich & Young, 1997; Singer, 2005a) have argued the nature of reality (ontology), how one comes to know that reality (epistemology), and the values and morals associated with that reality (axiology) have been one-sided and developed out of a civilization of racism (i.e., epistemological racism). The historical, entrenched and systemic nature of racism and white privilege within US society (see Feagin, 2014) thus requires alternative approaches to understanding the realities of those who have been traditionally discriminated against and oppressed.

As its name implies, systemic racism theory centers its attention on the institutionally entrenched nature of racism that has profoundly affected blacks and other people of color (e.g., Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans). When attempting to comprehend the negative position of racial and ethnic groups in the US, according to West (1994), race must be the central topic of dialogue. The overwhelming marginalization of people of color must be deeply understood if changes are to be made, and systemic racism is a unique framework geared to grasp the systemic racism issue in order to make realistic approaches to solving the inequitable position faced by racial and ethnic minorities. As a critical sociological theory built from and improved upon previous sociological theories on racial and ethnic relations, systemic racism theory seems an ideal framework to delve into the black experience in the collegiate athletic context. The remainder of this section will outline the six primary tenets of the systemic racism framework.

### **Whites' Unjust Enrichment; Blacks' Unjust Impoverishment**

The first tenet of systemic racism theory, *whites' unjust enrichment and blacks' unjust impoverishment*, identifies from the outset of establishing US society, blacks' life chances of fair advancement were already dictated by their enslavement, and later Jim Crow segregation. Within the institution of slavery (1619-1865), blacks were not considered complete human beings by whites, but seen as property. However, as a compromise between Northern and Southern states, slaves were counted as 3/5 of a person for taxation and appointment of the members of the US House of Representatives purposes (i.e., 3/5 compromise; US Constitution, 1787). This legally imposed status not

only allowed whites to obtain undeserved wealth, but it also ensured that blacks would remain permanently trapped at the bottom of the status hierarchy (Bell, 1992).

Eventually, the Civil War ended slavery. At this point, systemic racism took the form of segregation from 1876-1965 (see Robinson, 2005).

Jim Crow segregation was a time period that guaranteed unjust treatment and access for blacks (and unjust enrichment for whites) to employment, education, housing, justice system, and politics (e.g., Alexander, 2010). This time period was also recognized for the high influx of non-white immigrants attempting to legally claim a white identity (and for many to counter an imposed black identity), since whites were the only group rendered full access to society's resources (Lopez, 2006). When racial segregation was outlawed, according to Bobo and Smith (1998), contemporary institutionalized racism often took the form of more covert racism. This contemporary form of racism is not only recognized by the continued struggle by blacks for equality throughout US society, but it is also evident where blacks are accorded access and are overly represented (e.g., college sport participation) for nothing more than the economic benefits white elites gain from their presence (i.e., interest-convergence principle; see Bell, 1992). Hence, college athletics offer an ideal arena to illustrate this aggressively persisting inequitable reality.

Lapchick et al.'s (2013) numbers demonstrate this enrichment-impoverishment dichotomy, where they illustrate how the athletic fields and courts of play on college campus – primarily in women's basketball, men's basketball, and football – are overrepresented with black student-athletes, but their numbers as leaders (e.g., assistant

and head coaches, athletic directors) are severely underrepresented. What makes this significant is the fact that athletes essentially work for “free”, but many of those in leadership, more so at the NCAA Division I level, are making millions of dollars. As Hawkins (1995, 1999, 2001) argues it is difficult to not recognize the oppressive nature of NCAA Division I college campuses when black student-athletes are politically, economically, and racially exploited. In light of recent student-athlete pressures at Northwestern to unionize (see Strauss, 2014), it appears this exploitation has not gone unnoticed.

### **Racial Hierarchy with Divergent Group Interests**

A second tenet of systemic racism theory is *racial hierarchy with divergent group interests*. Since the inception of slavery, white economic elites forcefully developed a system of racial oppression. While historically this system was developed and supported by those with financial interests (e.g., slaveholders, traders, merchants), and was later maintained by industrialists and political elites (e.g., drafting of U.S. Constitution), it was the different classes of whites who assisted in the reproduction and maintenance of the oppressive scheme (Feagin, 2006, 2013).

According to Allen (1994), there was a historical period in which white elites feared a massive rebellion due to the oppressive nature of society over all lower socioeconomic classes; however, this potential threat was appeased by persuading lower socioeconomic class whites they have more social, cultural, and economic opportunity than people of color. Thus, the creation of a white racial hierarchy was born. After the Civil War, there were points in time when lower class white men and women joined

forces with people of color fighting injustice and economic inequality. However, the majority of whites were able to be financially and ideologically persuaded to recognize their white privilege and even violently turn against blacks (Du Bois, 1934, 1992).

Lopez (2006) contends the legal and social idea of whiteness was very powerful, for it provided a material and spiritual advantage that was recognized throughout US society. These latter critical phases were turning points which could have potentially deflated a racialized society, but the continued aggressive nature of the economic elites diffused this opportunity, just as they have done throughout the founding of this nation.

McDowell (2010) suggests the white-created dual subordinated social class and racial classification experienced by blacks in the US is carried over to sport.

When white males represent over eighty percent of the athletic director positions – the highest athletic leadership role on college campuses – and the assistant and head coach positions on teams where black athletes dominate in numbers, the existence of a racial hierarchy is made apparent. White women are not exempt from this discussion. While white males control over forty percent of the head coach jobs in women sports, white females control a vast majority of the remaining head coach spots, even women's basketball, a sport overrepresented by black female student-athletes (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Lapchick et al., 2013). The historical and contemporary racial hierarchy in US society continues to have a divergent group interest. Although women are shown to hold a lower position to men, when economic interests are at stake, race remains the most dominant form of oppression.

## **Social Reproduction and Alienation**

A third tenet of systemic racism theory, *social reproduction and alienation*, explains how wealth and privilege historically is transferred to wealth and privilege in later generations. In order to understand how the social system of racial inequity is reproduced, according to Feagin (2013), “an inter-temporal perspective on racial discrimination and related oppression is critical to a comprehensive understanding of the development and structure of US society” (p. 18). Social reproduction is evident when tracking the routine patterns of control over economic resources, along with police, political and ideological power, which establishes an alienated relationship between the oppressors (i.e., whites) and the oppressed (i.e., people of color). Moreover, alienation establishes and maintains a clear hierarchy of difference that is passed down from generation to generation in close networks (e.g., family, friends, co-workers), communities, and all major institutions.

Consequently, the system of inequality is so embedded within society, most whites miscalculate the extent the US is a racist society, as well as the underestimation of the racial and social inheritance (e.g., privilege, resources) which were passed down from their ancestors (DiTomaso, 2013; Feagin, 2013). Even the law has come to legitimize the unearned benefits that accrue to whites (Harris, 1993). Though class and gender differences exist amongst whites, which have hampered some whites from access to substantial wealth, psychological benefits have been gained by whites (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Feagin, 2006, 2013), as well as other societal advantages (e.g., education, jobs, health care). When considering contemporary white numerical dominance in college

sport leadership (Lapchick et al., 2013), it becomes apparent that such control has come about through white social reproduction.

In 2004, Hill demonstrated social reproduction was in full force when he found over the course of a twenty-two year period 381 vacancies became available for head football coach jobs in NCAA Division IA (known today as FBS), and only nineteen black coaches were hired to fill those roles. Even more troubling is the FBS currently has 128 football college athletic programs in its division with 51.6 % black student-athletes, yet there have never been more than fifteen black head coaches during a given year (Lapchick et al., 2013). Most disappointing is the white athletic directors, who run these athletic departments and persist in reproducing these white head coaches, contend racial discrimination in hiring does not exist in college athletics (Tabron, 2004).

### **White Racial Frame**

A fourth tenet of systemic racism theory is the *white racial frame*. “Frame,” from this perspective, is what contemporary scientists (e.g., cognitive, neurological, social) refer to as “a perspectival frame that gets embedded in individual minds (brains), as well as in collective memories and histories, and helps people make sense out of everyday situations” (Feagin, 2013, p. 9). The white racial frame accentuates a strong pro-white subframe, or a shared belief that whites are virtuous and superior in every important way compared to people of color, and a strong anti-black and anti-others (e.g., Latino) subframe (e.g., more than racist stereotypes and prejudices, but also racial narratives, racial images, racial emotions, and racial ideologies) established over centuries and used

to explain and rationalize extensive white power and privilege and institutionalized oppression targeting people of color.

The late nineteenth century illuminates the white racial framing, for it was known as a time period when scientific racism was in full force and blacks were seen and treated as a biologically and intellectually inferior race in all aspects compared to whites (e.g., Feagin, 2013; Miller, 1998; Wiggins, 2007). These racialized images grow to be part of the consciousness of many whites at an early age, and eventually develop as part of the unconscious mind (Lawrence, 1987), which has been confirmed in multiple “unconscious stereotyping” psychological tests (e.g., implicit association test; Vedantam, 2005). Other tests have revealed that regardless of what regions of the country elite and other whites live, they all share similar positive images and stereotypes about whites and negative images and stereotypes regarding Americans of color (Feagin & O’Brien, 2003). And even with the long and recent history of unjustified treatment towards people of color, many whites believe the reason why whites are more advantaged in the US is because they work harder than non-whites. Therefore, the white racial frame is a powerful reinforcer of systemic racism because of the shared negativity towards people of color, whether conscious, unconscious, or misinformed. In the context of sport, as Brooks and Althouse (2000) indicate, the framing of blacks by whites has been clearly evident, serving as a means to stagnate the progression of blacks beyond the playing field.

As several researchers (e.g., Bopp & Sagas, 2012; Bozeman & Faye, 2013; Brooks & Althouse, 2000) have uncovered, prestigious sport leadership jobs, such as



head football coach in NCAA Division I athletics, are more often filled by former athletes who have played central positions (e.g., quarterback, offensive lineman) as opposed to peripheral positions (e.g., wide receiver, defensive back). Since whites have typically filled central positions and blacks peripheral, then it becomes clearer as to why blacks are severely underrepresented as head football coaches. However, it is the nature of these positions that provide a clearer understanding of the racial problem. Since peripheral positions are stereotyped to be associated with greater athletic ability and central positions more intellect, the historical and contemporary framing of blacks as born with “natural” athletic ability and whites possessing more intellectual capacities (e.g., Marqusee, 2003; Mosley, 2003) has perpetuated the tendency of whites and blacks to be navigated to these particular roles on the football field. Because the sports media persistently perpetuates the framing of the races (e.g., Eagleman, 2011; Hardin, Dodd, Chance, & Walsdorf, 2004; Sailes, 2000), these misconceptions are entrenched in sport and perhaps play an important role in the continuing racially biased employment outcomes.

### **Extraordinary Cost and Burdens of Racism**

A fifth tenet is the importance of considering the life experiences and experiential intelligence of Americans of color when taking theoretical approaches to understand the costs of racial oppression. After all, it makes sense that blacks (and other people of color) would understand their past and present experiences dealing with racism better than anyone else. Moreover, this tenet of systemic racism theory, the *extraordinary costs and burdens of racism*, is indicative of the underserved

impoverishment of blacks, past and present, which is directly connected to the unwarranted wealth and privilege garnered by whites. This tenet is illuminated by many patterns, or what Shapiro (2004) calls “the hidden cost of being African American”, such as a reduced life expectancy and economic net worth of black families compared to those of whites; a lack of cultural capital, such as an education and job skills; and reduced ability to catch up to whites economically due to limited access to employment and education. These patterns have been recognized from slavery, through legal segregation, and in extensive present-day discrimination. The unfortunate costs have become a blueprint for lack of opportunity from the past, present, and future generations of people of color living in the US (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006). In many cases the extraordinary costs are not readily visible, and the voices of those who suffer these disparities may be the only way to fully understand racial oppression. As indicated in several places within the above review of literature, this has especially proved to be the case in understanding the black perspective on the oppressive nature of sport.

Most indicative to the costs and burdens blacks have to contend with in the coaching profession are the perceptions by those currently coaching and those wishing to enter. For instance, several researchers (e.g., Cunningham & Sagas, 2004; Cunningham & Sagas, 2007; Cunningham, Bruening, & Straub, 2006; Cunningham, Sagas, & Ashley, 2001) have revealed that the perceptions of discriminatory environments and lack of advancement result in high occupational turnover intent by black coaches, even when occupational commitment and job satisfaction are high. Similarly, black student-athletes contend that while they intend to join the coaching ranks, they perceive they will

experience stereotypes, discrimination, and less career advancement than their white counterparts (e.g., Cunningham, 2003; Cunningham & Singer, 2010; Kamphoff & Gill, 2008). As these examples demonstrate, the costs of racial discrimination are profound. When the perceptions of racial inequality burden those who are not even in the coaching profession, it is not difficult to recognize the entrenched reality of racism that permeates society.

### **Resisting Systemic Racism**

A sixth and final tenet of the systemic racism perspective is *resisting systemic racism*. Feagin (2006) contends not only is resistance the most important element of the systemic racism theoretical framework, but it is the only obvious and logical way to end racial oppression. To end racial oppression, aggressive activism must take place. With the end of slavery and Jim Crow segregation, history demonstrates aggressive collectiveness to be the only solution. For instance, as Feagin (2006) articulates very clearly:

From the Reconstruction Amendments of the 1860s and 1870s to the 1960s civil rights acts, from *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) to *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), black Americans have provided the impetus for many civil rights laws and court decisions from which Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, not just black Americans, have greatly benefited (p. 297).

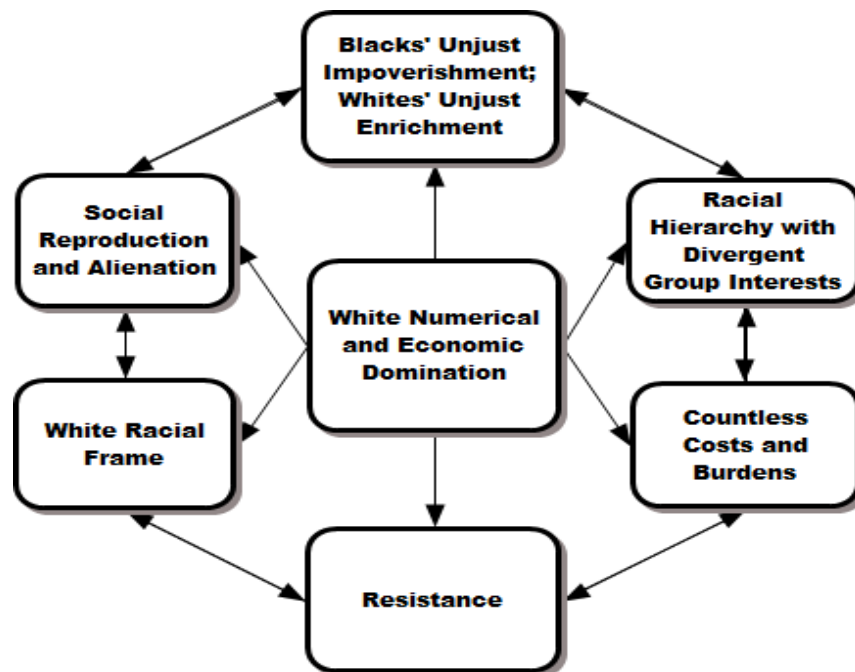
These examples are indicative of the anti-oppression counter-frame blacks have developed by living through centuries of anti-black oppression. Because racial oppression is evident in all major institutions, the demand for change should not be

limited to individual institutions; rather, reaching across boundaries and working together with others experiencing similar shortcomings can strengthen the demand for change. Whereas blacks and other people of color must be the stronghold in the movement, cross-race coalitions with whites may strengthen the thrust in the process for demanding social change (e.g., Guinier & Torres, 2002; Ladson-Billings & Donnor, 2005; Singer et al., 2010). This endeavor is no different within the institution of sport. Resistance to racial inequality overtime in sport is suggestive of this.

Whether the conversation is on historical or contemporary resistance to racism in sport, strategies have always been employed to increase black numbers in sport leadership positions. During the Civil Rights Movement (1955-1968), for instance, black athletes spoke out against the mistreatment of blacks throughout the US and the inequality in black coach representation on college campuses. Although met with much backlash, one of the most memorable and impactful protests was the Black Power salute by track and field athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games (e.g., Carlos & Zirin, 2013; Edwards, 1970; Hartmann, 2003). Although there have not been any recent events that have drawn comparable attention in the sports world for black equality, blacks have continued to find ways to resist racial inequality. For example, Cunningham and Sagas (2005) found that black head basketball coaches in NCAA Division I athletics were more likely than white coaches to have a greater number of black assistant coaches on staff, thus putting more blacks in positions to eventually become head coaches. Perhaps this is the reason why men's basketball is the most progressive sport in college athletics in terms of black leadership. It seems as

blacks elevate their positions of authority by status and numbers they are also resisting the sluggish progress for racial equality in sport.

Thus, based on the six primary tenets of systemic racism, and the abstract nature of theory, it was also beneficial to provide a visual depiction to aid in the interpretation and understanding of the theory. Therefore, Figure 1 illustrates the simultaneous interaction of the tenets with one another and with the root cause and maintenance of systemic racism: white economic domination. Considering several researchers (e.g., Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013) have demonstrated sport represents a microcosm of society, Figure 1 then serves as a means of portraying the interworking of white domination (e.g., power, privilege, wealth) and black marginalization in sport as well.



**Figure 1.** Illustrative summary of systemic racism theory, demonstrating white domination and its interactions that maintain a systemic racist structure.

The next chapter (Chapter III) will offer a detailed overview of the methods used to aid in answering the exploratory questions put forward. The chapter will be divided into two parts: Part I and Part II. Part I will be concerned primarily with performance comparisons between black and white head football collegiate coaches, and the sampling frames, designs, data sources, procedures, and data analyses for the various levels and divisions of college football examined in the current study will be laid out. Part II focuses on participants' (serving on a mock hiring committee) ascription of attributes, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendations for black and white, qualified and unqualified, job applicants for a head football coach position within a NCAA Division I athletics program. To guide Part II, the sampling frame, design, measures, procedure, and analyses will be outlined.

### CHAPTER III

#### REASEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Black head coaches in the collegiate athletic setting are severely underrepresented, while white coaches continue to disproportionately dominate on a large scale. Much attention has been brought to the condition black coaches are experiencing, but the problem persists. Perhaps one of the concerns is the theoretical approaches that have been applied to understanding the racial issues in college sport. Such frameworks, guided by the researchers' epistemologies, have neglected to recognize race and racism as fundamental elements needing to be the center of the discussion (Singer, 2005a). As a result, when examining the racial inequality in college athletics many of the theories utilized lack an agenda to interrogate the powerful whites who control the institution of sport and make the hiring decisions, while also minimizing the focus and severity of the race problem (Oglesby & Schrader, 2000) and lack recognition that sport is a functioning piece of the larger racialized economic and political environments (Frisby, 2005). Minimizing racism and the scope of its impact sends a message that sport is a unique institution, one where its issues are independent from society at large. This is problematic since sport can be viewed as a microcosm of society, reflecting its ideals, hierarchies, and its systemic problems (see Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013).

Guided by systemic racism theory (Feagin, 2006), this chapter outlines the research design and methodology that was utilized to explore the underrepresentation of

black collegiate coaches. More specifically, Part I examines the problem quantitatively and Part II quantitatively and qualitatively. This approach seems fitting given a more complete picture is depicted, which allows for a thorough and better comprehension of the problem.

When considering the sociology of discrimination, Pager and Shepherd (2008) suggest there are five primary methods for measuring discrimination: experiences of discrimination, reports by discriminators, statistical analyses, experimental approaches, and examining law and legal records. In the previous review of literature highlighting the dearth of black coaches in the collegiate context, statistical analyses, experimental approaches, and experiences of discrimination were the three methods utilized most often. While the examination of law and legal records was not an approach used, some researchers (e.g., Agyemang & DeLorme, 2010; Singer et al., 2010) applied a theory capable of taking this direction (CRT), but instead took a similarly important path (i.e., procedural justice) to interrogate the hiring practices of white decision-makers towards black football coaches. The final measurement and one of the rarest, reports by discriminators, is absent in the review of literature. In fact, as emphasized previously, those individuals who do the hiring and are responsible for the underrepresentation of black football coaches (i.e., athletic director) contend that black coaches are fairly treated in the hiring process (see Tabron, 2004).

For the current study, statistical analyses and an experimental approach were the primary methods of measurement. However, within the experimental approach (Part II), comment sections were included so that participants (mock hiring committee) could



explain their answer choices. This inclusion was important so that, if hiring discrimination was shown to exist in the findings, a better comprehension could be had as to why these potential discriminators made their decisions. Systemic racism theory seems fitting in understanding these outcomes because as a critical and sociological race-based theory, interrogating white gatekeepers' decisions that help sustain their dominant positioning – numerically and economically - is at its core. Both sections are explained in detail below.

### **Part I**

The first part of this study was descriptive and quantitative in nature and designed to provide performance comparisons between white and black head coaches leading NCAA Division I (FBS and FCS) and Division II football teams. In focusing on the new (2014) FBS, FCS and Division II head coaches for the upcoming football season and the head coaches during the year (2012) black coaches reached an all-time numerical high in the FBS allows for a broader and more vivid depiction of the white-black coach dichotomy in the collegiate athletic setting.

The objective in taking this proposed path was because although it is understood that black coaches are not proportionately represented comparable to their numbers on the field as athletes and to the number of coaching positions filled by whites (see Lapchick et al., 2013), it is not known if this numerical underrepresentation is in anyway warranted. By comparing performances of white and black head coaches at the NCAA Division I and II levels, a better understanding and potentially stronger argument can be made as to why blacks are undeserving of their marginal leadership placement. Such an

unfortunate finding will also allow a more confident assessment and interrogation of the numerical majority white athletic directors who do the hiring. To assist in painting this picture, the following exploratory questions were put forward, specifically for available data on the key years of 2012-2014:

*Question 1:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in 2013 wins?

*Question 2:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure wins?

*Question 3:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure first-year wins?

*Question 4:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in previous tenure wins to reach a bowl game (playoff for FCS)?

*Question 5:* How do 2014 black and white head football coaches compare in overall number of 2013 bowl appearances (playoff for FCS and Division II)?

*Question 6:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in tenure wins?

*Question 7:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in first-year wins?

*Question 8:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in wins to reach bowl games?

*Question 9:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in final year wins?

*Question 10:* How do 2012 black head coaches and their white predecessors compare in length of tenure?

*Question 11:* How do 2012 terminated black head coaches (first and last year wins) compare to their white successors' first-year wins?

### *Sampling Frame*

According to the NCAA's website (ncaa.org), as of 2014 there are currently 128 FBS college teams - three of which are in transition to becoming FBS programs – but were included in the total FBS list by the NCAA. Of the FBS programs, ten were not included in the final sample. Two programs were not included because they had not yet hired a coach for the upcoming 2014 football season. Because the objective was to compare black versus white coaching performances, two additional programs were excluded since those programs were being led by coaches who were neither white nor black. Since performance comparisons were made with coaches who were (sole) head coaches during the previous (2013) college football season, another six programs were excluded; two of the 2014 hires were offensive coordinators the previous season, one was a defensive coordinator, two were assistant head coaches, and one did not coach during the 2013 season. The final sample included 118 FBS coaches ( $n = 118$ ). Of these FBS programs, 106 were led by white head coaches and 12 by black head coaches.

The NCAA website (ncaa.org) currently lists 126 college football programs representing the FCS. Of the 126 programs, twenty-two were excluded from the current

study. Four were excluded because at the time of data collection, the position was listed as “vacant.” Because the objective is to look at previous performance as a head coach, another eighteen coaches were eliminated from the study since in 2013 these coaches did not serve as a head coach. These excluded coaches consisted of nine assistant coaches (two are black), four defensive coordinators, three offensive coordinators, one was a junior college coach in 2013, and one did not coach the previous season. The final sample included 104 FCS coaches ( $n = 104$ ). Of these FCS programs, 85 were led by white head coaches and 19 by black head coaches.

The NCAA website ([ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org)) currently lists 171 college football programs representing Division II. Of the 171 programs, four were excluded from the current study. Two were omitted because as of 2014, these football programs were new representatives in Division II. Additionally, because the objective of the current study was to compare performances of black and white head coaches, two more coaches were eliminated since their races were neither white nor black. The final sample included 167 Division II head coaches ( $n = 167$ ). Of these Division II programs, 137 were led by white head coaches and 30 by black head coaches.

Finally, this study also compared performances of the fifteen FBS black head coaches during the year (2012) they reached an all-time numerical high in the FBS ( $n = 15$ ). Performances of these fifteen black head coaches were compared to the fifteen previous white head coaches they succeeded ( $n = 15$ ). Data on these coaches were collected as of the upcoming 2014 season. Additionally, for those black coaches who no longer had their jobs as of the end of the 2012 season, their last-year and first-year wins

were compared to first-year wins of white successors who coached at the same institutions during the 2013 season. Although there were five black coaches who were no longer employed at their previous institutions at the conclusion of the 2012 season, only three black coaches ( $n = 3$ ) will be compared to their white successors ( $n = 3$ ) since two of the five black coaches left voluntarily to head coach at a higher ranked football institution.

### *Design*

Because the objective of this part of the study was not to answer the questions of *why/how/when*, but instead *what*, a descriptive research design was used.

### *Data Source*

A current list of the FBS, FCS and Division II teams and current head coaches of those teams was gathered from the NCAA website (ncaa.org). This allowed for the retrieval of the most current number of black and white head coaches who will hold a collegiate head coach position during the 2014 season. Knowing who these head coaches are made it easier to go to their current collegiate institution athletic websites to determine where they resided during the previous (2013) season, so as to gather their performance statistics in order to answer the questions put forward in Part I of the present study. Division II data showed only institution information.

Lapchick et al.'s (2013) *The 2012 Racial and Gender Report Card: College Sport* was utilized to gather the total number, names, and university affiliation of FBS black coaches during the 2012 season. Visiting the collegiate athletic website of these coaches gave the necessary information to answer the remaining questions outlined:

average tenure wins, first-year wins, final-year wins, wins to reach a bowl game, length of tenure, as well as the white head coaches who preceded and succeeded them and their performances.

The above sources increased the reliability and validity of the data in several ways. The NCAA website lists the number and names of schools and head coaches in the FBS and FCS (name of school only for Division II). This made it easier to link to each school's athletic website, which allowed direct access to the current coach's record and photo. The coach's photo made it easier to determine his race, while his listed professional record at that particular institution made the collection of data to answer the questions put forward in this section of the study convenient and accurate. When there was no coach hired at the time of data collection, or the coach who was hired did not head coach the previous season, the athletic website's overview of each coach's professional experience was clearly laid out.

Similarly, Lapchick et al. (2013) highlighting the record-setting number, names, and university affiliations of the fifteen FBS black coaches during the 2012 season allowed easy access to obtain all the necessary and accurate information to answer the questions put forward. The same university athletic websites where these black coaches' information was retrieved conveniently allowed for the accurate recovery of information on the white coaches who preceded and succeeded them.

### *Procedure & Data Analyses*

As the data for the 2014 FBS head coaches, the 2014 FCS head coaches, 2014 Division II head coaches and the 2012 black coaches and their white predecessors and

successors were collected, they were entered into the *SPSS Statistics 18* computer program. All variables in the *SPSS* program were labeled and coded as necessary, which included how missing values were handled. In all scenarios listed above, black coaches were coded with a “1” and white coaches were coded with a “2.” Because not all coaches made it to a postseason football bowl game (FBS) during their tenures, missing values for “Average Wins to Bowl” were coded with a “0;” similarly, because not all coaches made it to a postseason football playoff (FCS and Division II) during their tenures, missing values for “Average Wins to Playoff” were coded with a “0.” For 2012 FBS black coaches specifically, because not all fifteen coaches lost their jobs by the conclusion of the 2013 football season, missing values for “Length of Tenure” were coded with a “0.” Similarly, “Final Year Wins” was coded with a “99;” “0” was not used as a missing value in this case, since some coaches (white and black) scored a zero-win record during their final season.

There were several variables used in Part I of the current study to aid in answering the exploratory questions put forward, and they will be briefly defined here. The variables utilized to examine 2014 FBS, FCS, and Division II coach comparisons were “2013 Wins,” “Previous Tenure Wins,” “Previous Tenure First-Year Wins,” “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl,” “2013 Bowl Appearance,” “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Playoff,” and “2013 Playoff Appearance.” In order to compare how coaches performed during their previous football season (“2013 Wins”), average number of wins were tallied for all white and black head coaches during the 2013 football season for their respective divisions (i.e., FBS, FCS, Division II). Similarly, “Previous Tenure

Wins” were tallied for an overall average number of wins for all white and black head coaches, except this average was for wins for the entire term heading their current or previous athletic program; if 2014 is the first year a coach is heading their football program, then the previous football program the coach headed was considered.

“Previous Tenure First-Year Wins” also considered black and white coaches’ previous term prior to 2014 as a head coach, except this comparison was specifically concerned with average number of wins for their first year heading that football program.

“Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl” (FBS) and “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Playoff” (FCS, Division II), like the two previous variables, considered the entire previous term white and black coaches headed a football program, but the average number of wins were tallied only for the seasons the coaches successfully made a post-season bowl or playoff appearance, respectively. Both “2013 Bowl Appearance” (FBS) and “2013 Playoff Appearance” (FCS, Division II) tallied the average number of white and black head coaches who made a post-season bowl and playoff appearance, respectively, for the 2013 football season.

Variables utilized to compare 2012 FBS black head coaches and their white predecessors were “Tenure Wins,” “First-Year Wins,” “Final-Year Wins,” “Wins to Reach a Bowl,” and “Length of Tenure.” The first variable (“Tenure Wins”) tallied and compared the average number of wins for black coaches (at their 2012 institution up until the end of the 2013 season) and their white predecessors who served prior to them heading the same football program. “First-Year Wins” compared the average number of wins for black head coaches and their white predecessors during their first seasons



heading the same football program. Similar to the previous variable, “Final Year Wins” compared average number of wins for black head coaches and their white predecessors, except this comparison was made for the final season as head coach of that particular football program. “Length of Tenure” compared the average number of years black head coaches and their white predecessors headed their football programs before parting ways. “Wins to Reach a Bowl” examined the average number of wins for the seasons black head coaches and their white predecessors successfully made a post-season bowl appearance during their entire term heading the same football program.

Variables used to compare 2012 FBS black head coaches and their white successors were “First-Year Wins” and “Last vs. First-Year Wins.” In comparing those black head coaches who lost their jobs at the conclusion of the 2012 football season with those white coaches who succeeded them, average “First-Year Wins” of black coaches during their previous tenure and white coaches during the 2013 football season were examined. Additionally, “Last vs. First-Year Wins” was a comparison of average wins of black head coaches during their final 2012 season with first-year wins of white coaches during their 2013 football season.

### **FBS Coach Comparisons**

Means and standard deviations were computed for 2014 FBS head coaches’ “2013 Wins,” “Previous Tenure Wins,” “Previous Tenure First-Year Wins,” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl.” Percent per racial group to make a “2013 Bowl Appearance” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl” was also computed. While there is an overall sample size of ( $n = 118$ ), the sample sizes for “2013 Bowl

Appearance” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl” do not numerically represent the full sample. This is the case because although all 118 head coaches in the sample were head coaches during the 2013 football season, some either did not make a bowl appearance during the 2013 season and/or during their previous coaching tenure, respectively. Independent-samples  $t$  tests were run to determine differences between white and black head coaches for the first four variables (i.e., 2013 Wins, Previous Tenure Wins, Previous Tenure First-Year Wins, and Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl).

### **FCS Coach Comparisons**

Means and standard deviations were computed for 2014 FCS head coaches’ “2013 Wins,” “Previous Tenure Wins,” “Previous Tenure First-Year Wins,” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Playoff.” Percent per racial group to make a “2013 Playoff Appearance” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Playoff” was also computed. While there is an overall sample size of ( $n = 104$ ), the sample sizes for “2013 Playoff Appearance” and “Previous Tenure Wins to Playoff” do not numerically represent the full sample. This is the case because although all 104 head coaches in the sample were head coaches during the 2013 football season, some either did not make a playoff appearance during the 2013 season and/or during their previous coaching tenure, respectively; only twenty-four teams can make a post-season playoff appearance. Independent-samples  $t$  tests were run to determine differences between white and black head coaches for the first four variables (i.e., 2013 Wins, Previous Tenure Wins, Previous Tenure First-Year Wins, and Previous Tenure Wins Playoff).

## **Division II Football Coach Comparisons**

Means and standard deviations were computed for 2014 Division II head coaches' "2013 Wins." Percent per racial group to make a "2013 Playoff Appearance" was also computed. While there is an overall sample size of ( $n = 167$ ), the sample size for "2013 Playoff Appearance" does not numerically represent the full sample. This is the case because although all 167 head coaches in the sample were head coaches during the 2013 football season, most did not make a playoff appearance during the 2013 season; only twenty-four teams can make a post-season playoff appearance. An independent-samples  $t$  test was run to determine the difference between white and black head coaches for "2013 Wins."

## **2012 FBS Black Coaches versus White Predecessors**

Means and standard deviations were computed for the 2012 FBS black head coaches and their white predecessors' "Tenure Wins," "First-Year Wins," "Final-Year Wins," "Wins to Reach a Bowl," and "Length of Tenure." Two variables (Final-Year Wins and Length of Tenure) did not represent the full sample ( $n = 15$ ) of black coaches because not all of these coaches' season ended as of the conclusion of the 2013 season, while "Wins to Reach a Bowl" did not represent the full sample of black coaches or white coaches since some of these head coaches did not make a bowl appearance at that particular institution as of the conclusion of the 2013 season. Independent-samples  $t$  tests were run to determine differences between white and black head coaches for all five variables (Tenure Wins, First-Year Wins, Final-Year Wins, Wins to Reach a Bowl, and Length of Tenure).

## **2012 Terminated FBS Black Coaches versus White Successors**

Two additional independent-samples *t* tests were run to compare last-year and first-year wins of the three black coaches who were terminated at the conclusion of the 2012 football season with first-year wins of their white successors during the 2013 football season. Means and standard deviations were computed for these comparisons.

### **Part II**

The negative societal attitudes and racial framing towards ethnic and racial groups, particularly blacks (e.g., lazy, unintelligent, criminal), suggests strong support why exclusionary hiring practices exist for this group (Feagin, 2013, 2014). Causality of ethnic and racial discrimination (e.g., hiring practices) is built on misinformation, stereotypes, and myths (Kivel, 2005; Feagin, 2013; Sartore & Cunningham, 2006; Stodolska, 2005). Therefore, negative attributions made towards black potential job candidates could have an influential impact on perceptions of job fit and hiring recommendations. In order to receive a hiring recommendation there must be a match between an applicant and specific job (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996), and perceived attributes of potential candidates play an important, mediating role. If job fit is decided by more than just qualifications, such as perceived traits of candidates, then negative perceptions towards black applicants could result in blacks not being considered a good fit for the position. Conversely, because research has shown that regardless of what region of the country whites live they tend to view whites more favorably when compared to blacks (Feagin & O'Brien, 2003), then perhaps the current context will be

no different and the reproduction of white head football coaches and the maintenance of a white racial hierarchy will carry on.

Therefore, this study examined these possibilities (ascribed attributions, job fit, and hiring recommendation). Specifically, participants received information on a job candidate applying for a head football coach position in a NCAA Division I athletic program. The race of the applicant (black, white) and the qualifications the candidate possesses (high, low) was varied. In order to help guide this section of the current study, the following exploratory questions were put forward in regard to trial hiring committees:

*Question 1:* What are the potential negative attitudes held toward both black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a FBS collegiate athletic program?

*Question 2:* What are the perceptions of job fit toward black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a FBS collegiate athletic program?

*Question 3:* How would study participants (mock hiring committee) differently recommend black and white job applicants seeking a head coach position in a FBS collegiate athletic program?

*Question 4:* What role do qualifications play on job applicant race and job-related outcomes (i.e., attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendations)?

### *Sampling Frame*

Data were collected from 290 undergraduate sociology students ( $n = 290$ ) from a major Division I university in the Southwest United States. All students participated voluntarily. Of the participants 30.1% were male and 69.9% were female, with an age distribution of 17-24 years ( $M = 19.4$ ,  $SD = 1.2$ ). Participants were primarily white (62.8%), next Hispanic or Latino (24.7%), then Black or African American (5.5%), Asian (4.3%), Other (1.2%), checked more than one box (1.2%), and finally Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (.3%). Academic standing showed freshmen (41%) made up the largest number of participants, next sophomores (31%), then juniors (21%), and finally seniors (7%).

### *Design*

Because the attempt was to understand some cause (applicants' race and qualifications) and effect (ascribed attributions, perceived job fit, and hiring recommendation), and there was at least one independent variable and two or more groups being examined, the current study used a causal-comparative research design.

### *Measures*

A study packet containing manipulations and questionnaire was utilized for data collection. The questionnaire was adopted from Sartore and Cunningham (2007), who looked at weight discrimination in hiring practices. Some of the modifications made to the questionnaire for the current study were changes to a few of the attributes, and there was also the inclusion of three writing spaces on the questionnaire – located after the three primary set of questions: ascribed attributes, job fit, and hiring recommendation –

for participants to explain their reasoning why they answered the previous questions the way that they did.

Except for demographic information (outlined above) and attribution assessment, all questions (job fit, hiring recommendation) were anchored by a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Means for multi-item scales represented the final score for that variable. Similar to Sartore and Cunningham (2007), competing confirmatory-factorial analyses were conducted to examine the factor structure of the three dependent variables (attributions, job fit, hiring recommendation). Two models were tested: the proposed model which included the three latent factors, and an alternative model which included two latent factors (job fit and hiring recommendation combined to form one item). While both models were found to be a good fit, the three-factor model was a better fit to the data  $\chi^2 (62, n = 290) = 203.38, p < .001, CFI = .96$ , than the two-factor model  $\chi^2 (64, n = 290) = 374.53, p < .001, CFI = .91$ . Factor validity of the measures was supported by the data. Appendix A offers an illustration of the survey instrument utilized in the current study; the photos of the job applicants could not be included here due to copyright laws.

Attributions were assessed with seven items preceded by the phrase “In general, I would rate this applicant as...” The word-pairing for the semantic differential scale will include “hard worker-lazy,” “reliable-unreliable,” “pleasant-unpleasant,” “disciplined-undisciplined,” “easy going-aggressive,” “leader-follower,” and “motivated-unmotivated.” The scale demonstrated acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

Three items were used to assess job fit: “Based on this information, I would say that the applicant was a good fit for the job,” “this person seems to have the characteristics necessary for the job,” and “this applicant seems to be a poor match for the job” (reverse scored). The scale demonstrated acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

Three items were used to assess hiring recommendations: “Hiring this individual would be the wrong decision” (reverse scored), “given the opportunity, I would recommend that the athletic department hire this applicant for the position,” and “I would hire this person for the head coach position.” The scale demonstrated acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

Because research has shown that people tend to hire people similar to themselves (e.g., Cunningham & Sagas, 2005; Regan & Cunningham, 2012; Whisenant & Mullane, 2007), the question “How similar/different do you consider yourself to be to the job candidate?” was included in the questionnaire and serves as a control variable; this variable is anchored by a Likert-type scale from 1 (*very different*) to 7 (*very similar*).

### *Procedure*

A 2 (race: black, white)  $\times$  2 (qualification level: high qualifications, low qualifications) experiment was undertaken to investigate the study objectives. To avoid class effects, students in each class were randomly assigned to each experimental condition. Each participant was given a study packet that contained the Information Sheet (first page of questionnaire), instructions, manipulations, and the questionnaire (see Appendix A).



Students were given a brief overview of the study, explained their role as participants (mock hiring committee), told their participation is completely anonymous, underscored that voluntary contribution is considered consent to participate, and overviewed how and who they could contact should they have any questions and/or concerns about their participation; all of this information was verbally mentioned to participants and included on the Information Sheet. The following page illustrated the head coach job description, containing position summary, essential and secondary responsibilities, organizational relationships, and education and work experience requirements. The next page included a summary of the instructions on filling out the questionnaire, as well as an upper body-head photo of the job candidate and their qualifications where manipulations were embedded. The final three pages consisted of the questionnaire items to be answered, comprising of Liker-type scales, short-answer response spaces, and demographic data gathering.

A pilot study was conducted to determine the efficacy of the qualification manipulation. Participants consisted of 46 undergraduate sociology students. Anchored by a 7-Point Likert-type scale – from 1 (*unqualified*) to 7 (*qualified*) – participants were asked “After reading the job description information for a head coach position at a NCAA Division I university, if a job candidate had the listed qualifications (bottom of page) how would you rate them for the job?” Results showed significant differences in the ratings for qualifications,  $t(44) = 10.03, p < .001$ . Because the qualification manipulation was successful in the pilot study, the main data-collection ensued.

The short-answer responses will not be analyzed statistically as the other data within the questionnaire, but will be utilized as a crucial piece of elaboration for answer choices; this elaboration will be illustrated in Chapter V. Each short-answer question, however, will be numerically tallied, dissected by three forms of commentary (i.e., positive, negative, not enough information to make a decision), and by participant race (i.e., white, non-white). This information will be highlighted in Chapter IV.

In accordance with guidelines of Texas A&M University regarding the protection of human participants, a request for review was submitted to the TAMU Institutional Review Board and approved to recruit and survey the participants in the current study.

### *Analyses*

Means and standard deviations were computed for all variables. For the objectives of the study, testing was executed by way of a 2 (race: black, white)  $\times$  2 (qualification level: high qualifications, low qualifications) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), with applicant “similarity to self” serving as a control variable and attributions, job fit, and hiring recommendations serving as the dependent variables.

The next chapter (Chapter IV) will summarize the results of Parts I and II of the current study. Because results will be discussed and interpreted in detail in Chapter V, Chapter IV will provide the results of the various statistical analyses with only brief explanations of the findings. Since Part II was also concerned with better understanding the reasoning behind participants’ answer choices, the qualitative responses by participants (included on questionnaire) will be tallied and further divided into response

type (i.e., positive, negative, not enough information to make a decision). This latter process is important, for it sets up the detailed discussions and interpretations that will follow in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Black head coaches in the collegiate athletic setting are severely underrepresented, while white coaches continue to disproportionately dominate on a large scale. Much attention has been brought to the condition black coaches are experiencing, but the problem persists. Perhaps one of the concerns is the theoretical approaches that have been applied to understanding the racial issues in college sport. Such frameworks, guided by the researchers' epistemologies, have neglected to recognize race and racism as fundamental elements needing to be the center of the discussion (Singer, 2005a). As a result, when examining the racial inequality in college athletics many of the theories utilized lack an agenda to interrogate the powerful whites who control the institution of sport and make the hiring decisions, while also minimizing the focus and severity of the race problem (Oglesby & Schrader, 2000) and lack recognition that sport is a functioning piece of the larger racialized economic and political environments (Frisby, 2005). Minimizing racism and the scope of its impact sends a message that sport is a unique institution, one where its issues are independent from society at large. This is problematic since sport can be viewed as a microcosm of society, reflecting its ideals, hierarchies, and its systemic problems (see Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013).

This chapter highlights the findings from Parts I and II of the current study. Part I reveals performance comparison results between black and white coaches. Part II

illustrates questionnaire results, indicating participant (mock hiring committee) perceptions of whether or not white and black, qualified and unqualified, candidates were a good fit and worthy of hire for a head football coach position in a NCAA Division I college athletic program. Because Chapter V will go into more depth in interpreting results found in Chapter IV, explanation of findings in this chapter are brief and more general in nature.

## **Part I**

### *FBS Coach Comparisons*

Table 1 provides means and standard deviations for various performance comparisons between white and black head coaches for the upcoming 2014 FBS football season. As illustrated, the upcoming 2014 season has 112 white coaches, 12 black coaches, 2 coaches who are neither white nor black, and two vacant coaching positions. However, because the goal was to compare performances between white and black coaches who head coached the previous football season (2013), eight coaches (and the two vacant positions) were eliminated from the study. So, for the current study, there were 106 white coaches and 12 black coaches ( $n = 118$ ) examined.

**Table 1** Means and Standard Deviations for 2014 FBS Head Coaches' Previous Performances

Performance	Black Coaches			White Coaches		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2013 Wins	12	6.58	4.10	106	7.07	3.19
Previous Tenure Wins	12	6.32	3.81	106	6.73	2.78
Previous Tenure First-Year Wins	12	5.25	3.39	106	5.66	3.16
Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl	8 (67.00%)	9.36	1.88	80 (75.47%)	8.78	1.56
2013 Bowl Appearance	7 (58.33%)			63 (59.43%)		

Comparing “2013 Wins” white coaches ( $M = 7.07$ ,  $SD = 3.19$ ) outperformed black coaches a little ( $M = 6.58$ ,  $SD = 4.10$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(116) = .483$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although white coaches had a little better 2013 winning record than black coaches, the difference was too marginal to conclude white coaches were better coaches (or black coaches worse) during that year. Comparing “Previous Tenure Wins” white coaches ( $M = 6.73$ ,  $SD = 2.78$ ) outperformed black coaches ( $M = 6.32$ ,  $SD = 3.81$ ), but the difference was minor and not significant:  $t(116) = .360$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although white coaches had a little better previous tenure winning record than black coaches, the difference was too insignificant to conclude white coaches were better coaches (or black coaches worse) over the course of their previous tenure. Comparing “Previous Tenure First-Year Wins”

white coaches ( $M = 5.66$ ,  $SD = 3.16$ ) outperformed black coaches ( $M = 5.25$ ,  $SD = 3.39$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(116) = .423$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that while white coaches had a better first-year record than black coaches, the difference was too minimal to conclude white coaches were better coaches (or black coaches worse) during the first year of their previous tenure. Comparing “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Bowl” black coaches ( $M = 9.36$ ,  $SD = 1.88$ ) outperformed white coaches ( $M = 8.80$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(84) = .958$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches had a little better winning record to reach a bowl game during their previous tenure, the difference was too marginal to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or white coaches worse) during the season(s) they made a bowl appearance. Comparing those coaches who made a “2013 Bowl Appearance” showed black coaches ( $n = 7$ ) and white coaches ( $n = 62$ ) appeared almost identically: 58.33% and 58.49%, respectively.

#### *FCS Coach Comparisons*

Table 2 provides means and standard deviations for various performance comparisons between white and black head coaches for the upcoming 2014 FCS football season. As illustrated, the upcoming 2014 season has 101 white coaches, 21 black coaches, and four vacant coaching positions. However, because the goal was to compare performances between white and black coaches who head coached the previous football season (2013), eighteen coaches (and the four vacant positions) were eliminated from the study. So, for the current study, there were 85 white coaches and 19 black coaches ( $n = 104$ ) examined.

**Table 2** Means and Standard Deviations for 2014 FCS Head Coaches' Previous Performances

Performance	Black Coaches			White Coaches		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2013 Wins	19	6.37	2.69	85	6.16	2.89
Previous Tenure Wins	19	5.73	2.28	85	5.71	2.35
Previous Tenure First-Year Wins	19	4.68	2.19	85	4.50	2.62
Previous Tenure Wins to Playoff	8 (42.11%)	9.30	1.59	46 (54.12%)	8.92	1.57
2013 Playoff Appearance	4 (21.05%)			20 (23.53%)		

Comparing “2013 Wins” black coaches ( $M = 6.37$ ,  $SD = 2.69$ ) outperformed white coaches ( $M = 6.16$ ,  $SD = 2.89$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(102) = .281$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches had a better 2013 winning record than white coaches, the difference was too marginal to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or white coaches worse) during that year. Comparing “Previous Tenure Wins” black coaches ( $M = 5.73$ ,  $SD = 2.28$ ) outperformed white coaches ( $M = 5.71$ ,  $SD = 2.35$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(102) = .029$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches had a better previous tenure winning record than white coaches, the difference was too insignificant to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or white coaches worse) over the course of their previous tenure. Comparing “Previous Tenure First-Year Wins” black coaches ( $M =$



4.68,  $SD = 2.19$ ) outperformed white coaches ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 2.62$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(102) = .284$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that while black coaches had a better first-year record than white coaches, the difference was too minimal to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or white coaches worse) during the first year of their previous tenure. Comparing “Previous Tenure Wins to Reach a Playoff” black coaches ( $M = 9.30$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) outperformed white coaches ( $M = 8.92$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(52) = .626$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches had a better winning record to reach a playoff game during their previous tenure, the difference was too marginal to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or white coaches worse) during the season(s) they made a playoff appearance. Comparing those coaches who made a “2013 Playoff Appearance” showed black coaches ( $n = 4$ ) and white coaches ( $n = 20$ ) appeared similarly: 21.05% and 23.53%, respectively.

### *Division II Football Coach Comparisons*

Table 3 provides means and standard deviations for performance comparisons between white and black head coaches for the upcoming 2014 Division II football season. As illustrated, the sample includes 137 white coaches and 30 black coaches. Because the goal was to compare performances between white and black coaches who head coached the previous football season (2013), four coaches were eliminated from the study since two coaches’ race was neither white nor black and two football programs were new to Division II as of the 2014 season. So, for the current study, there were 137 white coaches and 30 black coaches ( $n = 167$ ) examined.

**Table 3** Means and Standard Deviations for 2014 Division II Head Coaches' Previous Performances

	Black Coaches			White Coaches		
Performance	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2013 Wins	30	4.73	2.35	137	5.76	3.09
2013 Playoff Appearance	2 (6.67%)			22 (16.06%)		

Comparing “2013 Wins” white coaches ( $M = 5.76$ ,  $SD = 3.09$ ) outperformed black coaches ( $M = 4.73$ ,  $SD = 2.35$ ), but the difference was minor and not significant:  $t(165) = 1.71$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although white coaches had a better 2013 winning record than black coaches, the difference was too marginal to conclude white coaches were better coaches (or black coaches worse) during that year. Comparing those coaches who made a “2013 Playoff Appearance” showed 6.67 % of black coaches ( $n = 2$ ) and 16.06% of white coaches ( $n = 20$ ) making it to the post-season.

#### *2012 FBS Black Coaches versus White Predecessors*

Table 4 provides means and standard deviations for various performance comparisons between the fifteen black head coaches (and their white predecessors) for the 2012 football season, the season when black head coaches reached an all-time numerical high. Comparing “Tenure Wins” showed black coaches ( $M = 5.42$ ,  $SD = 2.89$ ) outperformed their white predecessors ( $M = 4.75$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(28) = .774$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches had an overall better record than their white predecessors, the difference was too

minimal to conclude black coaches were better coaches (or their white predecessors worse) during their tenures. Comparing “First-Year Wins” showed black coaches ( $M = 4.73$ ,  $SD = 2.87$ ) outperformed their white predecessors ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 2.45$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(28) = .753$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although black coaches outperformed their white predecessors during the first year of their tenure, the difference was too insignificant to conclude black coaches had a better (or their white predecessors worse) first year. Comparing “Wins to Reach a Bowl” showed black coaches ( $M = 8.56$ ,  $SD = 1.78$ ) outperformed their white predecessors ( $M = 7.96$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(15) = .746$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that while black coaches had a better winning record to reach a bowl game, the difference was too marginal to conclude black coaches were better (or their white predecessors worse) during the season(s) they made a bowl appearance; however, it should be noted that ten black coaches versus seven white predecessors made a bowl appearance. Comparing “Final Year Wins” showed white coaches ( $M = 4.73$ ,  $SD = 3.26$ ) outperformed black coaches ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 4.09$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(22) = .632$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although white coaches had a better winning record during their final season, the difference was too minimal to conclude white coaches had a better (or black coaches worse) final season. Comparing “Length of Tenure” showed white coaches ( $M = 4.87$ ,  $SD = 2.07$ ) had longer tenures than black coaches ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), and this difference was significant:  $t(22) = 2.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . This latter (and only) significant finding suggests that although black coaches had an overall better record, more first-year wins, more wins during the

season(s) they made a bowl appearance, and more bowl appearances, their tenures did not last as long as their white predecessors.

**Table 4** *Means and Standard Deviations for 2012 FBS Black Head Coaches and White Predecessors' Performances*

Performance	Black Coaches			White Coaches		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Length of Tenure	9	3	1	15	4.87	2.07
Tenure Wins	15	5.42	2.89	15	4.75	1.71
First-Year Wins	15	4.73	2.87	15	4.00	2.45
Wins to Reach a Bowl	10	8.56	1.78	7	7.96	1.31
Final Year Wins	9	3.78	4.09	15	4.73	3.26

#### *2012 Terminated FBS Black Coaches versus White Successors*

Table 5 provides means and standard deviations for “First-Year Wins” and “Last vs. First Year Wins” comparisons between the three 2012 terminated black coaches and their white successors for the 2013 football season. Comparing “First-Year Wins” of black coaches who were terminated at the conclusion of the 2012 football season with their white successors in the 2013 football season showed black coaches outperformed ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ ) white coaches ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), but the difference was not significant:  $t(4) = 1.00$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that although terminated black coaches had a better first year than their white successors, differences were too marginal

to conclude black coaches had a better first year than their white counterparts.

Comparing last-year wins for terminated 2012 black coaches with first-year wins of their 2013 white successors (Last vs. First Year Wins) showed white coaches outperformed ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) their black predecessors ( $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = .58$ ), but the difference was not significant  $t(4) = 1.79$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding suggests that while white coaches had a better first year than black coaches had during their final year, the differences were too insignificant to conclude white coaches were better (or black coaches worse) in last-to-first year comparisons.

**Table 5** Means and Standard Deviations for 2012 FBS Black Head Coaches and White Successors' Performances

Performance	Black Coaches			White Coaches		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
First-Year Wins	3	4.00	2.00	3	2.67	1.15
Last vs. First Year Wins	3	1.33	0.58	3	2.67	1.15

## Part II

### *Black versus White Head Coach Job Candidates*

Table 6 provides means and standard deviations for Part II of the current study. As highlighted, participants ( $n = 290$ ) were undergraduate students in various sociology classes serving as members on a mock hiring committee. The objective of the hiring committee was to ascribe attributes and determine if a job candidate was a good fit and if they would give a hiring recommendation for a head coach position for a NCAA

Division I football program. Participants were randomly assigned to four conditions - 2 (black, white) x 2 (qualified, unqualified) – to determine how these conditions would impact participants’ attribution ascription, perceived job fit, and hiring recommendation.

**Table 6** Means and Standard Deviations for Black and White Head Coach Applicants

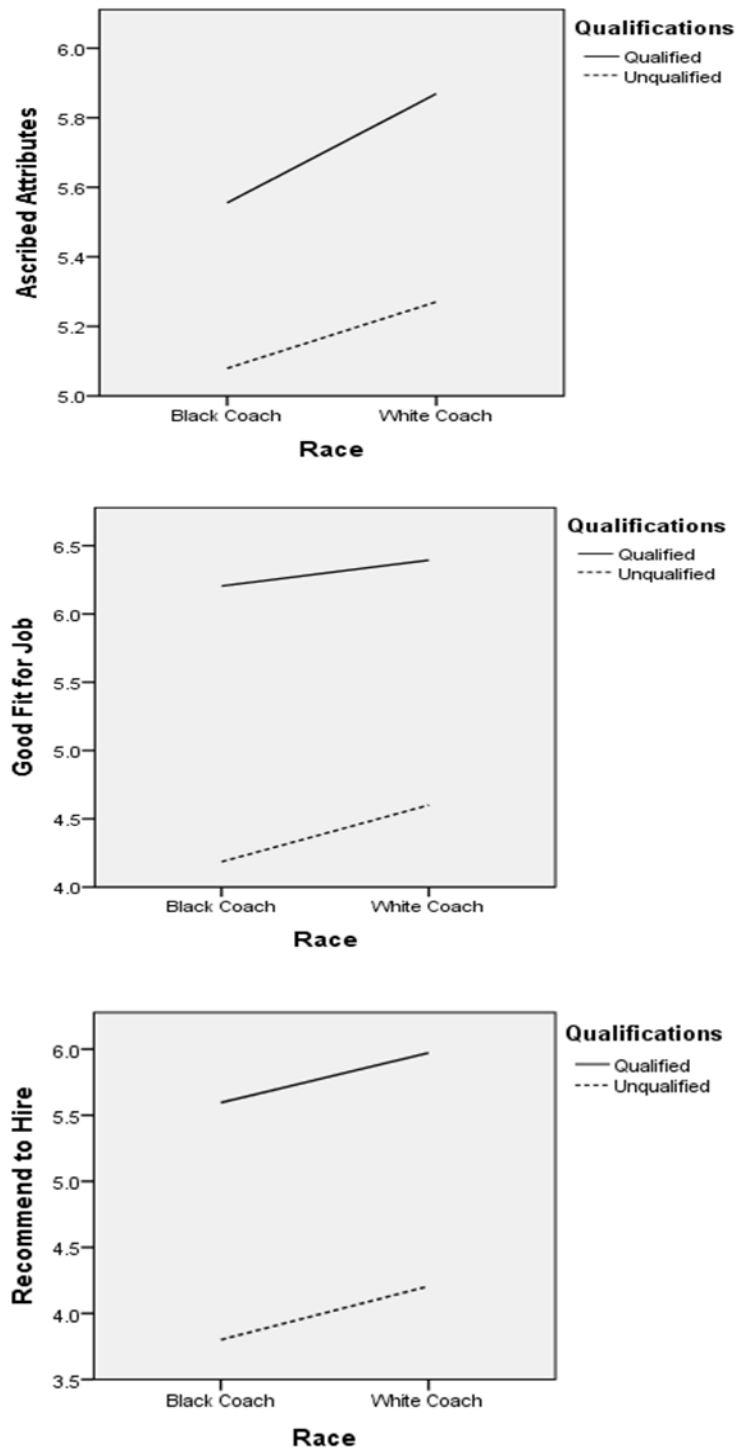
		Attributions			Job Fit			Hiring Recommendation		
Condition		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Black Coach	Qualified	70	5.56	0.68	70	6.21	0.68	70	5.60	1.02
	Unqualified	72	5.08	0.92	72	4.19	1.41	72	3.80	1.38
	Total	142	5.31	0.84	142	5.18	1.50	142	4.69	1.51
White Coach	Qualified	72	5.87	0.79	72	6.39	0.63	72	5.97	0.85
	Unqualified	76	5.27	0.86	76	4.60	1.37	76	4.21	1.48
	Total	148	5.56	0.88	148	5.47	1.40	148	5.07	1.50
Total	Qualified	142	5.71	0.75	142	6.30	0.66	142	5.79	0.95
	Unqualified	148	5.18	0.89	148	4.40	1.40	148	4.01	1.44
	Total	290	5.44	0.87	290	5.33	1.45	290	4.88	1.51

An initial test was executed by way of a 2 (race: black, white) × 2 (qualification level: high qualifications, low qualifications) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), with applicant “similarity to self” serving as a control variable and attributions, job fit, and hiring recommendations serving as the dependent variables. After excluding applicant “similarity to self” as nonsignificant, a follow-up MANOVA examined associations between the dependent and independent variables described above. Results showed a significant main effect for applicant race, Wilk’s Lambda = .97,  $F(3, 284) = 3.24$ ,  $p < .05$ , and applicant qualifications, Wilk’s Lambda = .56,  $F(3, 284) =$

75.96,  $p < .01$ . The interaction between applicant race and qualifications was not found to be significant, Wilk's Lambda = .99,  $F(3, 284) = 1.05$ , n.s., demonstrating that the level of applicant-held qualifications did not moderate the relationships between race and ascription of attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendations.

Results of follow-up univariate analyses showed significant effects for race on ascription of attributions,  $F(1, 286) = 6.88$ ,  $p < .01$ ; perceptions of job fit,  $F(1, 286) = 5.54$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and hiring recommendation,  $F(1, 286) = 7.50$ ,  $p < .01$ . Results of univariate analyses also showed significant effects for qualifications on ascription of attributions,  $F(1, 286) = 31.11$ ,  $p < .01$ ; perceptions of job fit,  $F(1, 286) = 220.58$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and hiring recommendation,  $F(1, 286) = 155.31$ ,  $p < .01$ .

Estimated marginal means suggested that the ascription of positive attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendation were lower when white and black applicants were unqualified; however, all were higher for the white applicant than for the black applicant. Estimated marginal means also suggested that when black and white applicants both possessed high levels of qualifications, the ascription of positive attributions, perceptions of job fit, and hiring recommendation were higher for white applicants than for black applicants. For ease of interpretation, Figure 2 presents an illustrative summary of the results.



**Figure 2.** Illustrative summary of the relationships between race and qualifications on ascribed attributes, fit for job, and hiring recommendation among head coach applicants.



Because many of the participants' responses will be laid out thematically in the following chapter, number and type of comments (i.e., positive, negative, not enough information to make a decision) and how they differentiated among black and white candidates are outlined here. For the black qualified candidate there were 74 responses on ascribed attributes, 73 responses on job fit, and 67 responses on hiring recommendations, for a total of 214 responses. The white qualified candidate had 72 responses on ascribed attributes, 70 on job fit, and 63 on hiring recommendation, for a total of 205 responses. The black unqualified candidate had 66 responses on ascribed attributes, 69 on job fit, and 62 on hiring recommendation, for a total of 197 responses. Finally, the white unqualified candidate had 69 responses on ascribed attributes, 68 on job fit, and 62 on hiring recommendation, for a total of 199 responses. By race, blacks had 411 responses and whites 404. Table 7 provides an illustration of these numbers.

**Table 7** *Questionnaire Responses for Black and White Head Coach Applicants*

Condition		Attributions	Job Fit	Hiring Recommendation
Black Coach	Qualified	74	73	67
	Unqualified	66	69	62
	Total	140	142	129
White Coach	Qualified	72	70	63
	Unqualified	69	68	62
	Total	141	138	125
Total	Qualified	146	143	130
	Unqualified	135	137	124
	Total	281	280	254

Next, participants' responses were further separated by positive, negative, and a lack of information on the applicant to make an informed decision. Because a combination of these three forms of comments can be found in a single response, the tally of comments in this fashion is greater than the previous section. For instance, a participant may have stated under the "hiring recommendation" section for a qualified candidate that on paper the applicant is more than qualified (positive), but will not recommend him for the position (negative) because they do not know his previous record on the field (not enough information). Another example under the "job fit" section for an unqualified candidate is the applicant does not meet the standards for the head coach position (negative), but seems to know enough that he would be a good fit as an assistant coach at the university (positive). These examples demonstrate that "negative" did not always mean comments were appalling (although some were), but rather the applicant was rejected for the position; similarly, "positive" comments did not always mean the applicant was selected for the position, but rather in many cases some kind words were included in his rejection for the position. As highlighted above, this made for some responses to include one, two, or all three types of comments in a single response.

Based on the above assumptions the black qualified coach had a total of 159 positive comments across all three categories, 38 negative comments, and 47 needing more information on the applicant. The qualified white candidate had a total of 171 positive comments, 17 negative comments, and 38 needing more information on the applicant. The black unqualified candidate had 76 positive comments, 121 negative

comments, and 29 needing more information on the applicant. Lastly, the white unqualified candidate had 112 positive comments, 97 negative comments, and 26 needing more information on the applicant. By race, blacks received 235 positive comments to whites' 283; blacks received 159 negative comments and whites 114; and not able to make a complete assessment because of limited information, blacks received 77 comments and whites 64. Table 8 provides an illustration of these numbers.

**Table 8** *Positive, Negative, and More Information Needed Responses by Applicant Race and Qualifications*

		Attributions			Job Fit			Hiring Recommendation		
Condition		Pos	Neg	Need Info	Pos	Neg	Need Info	Pos	Neg	Need Info
Black Coach	Qualified	61	6	29	56	13	8	42	19	10
	Unqualified	33	24	21	26	49	1	17	48	8
	Total	94	30	50	82	62	9	59	67	18
White Coach	Qualified	57	5	22	64	2	9	50	10	7
	Unqualified	46	22	15	38	40	3	28	35	8
	Total	103	27	37	102	42	12	78	45	15
Total	Qualified	118	11	51	120	15	17	92	29	17
	Unqualified	79	46	36	64	89	4	45	83	16
	Total	197	57	87	184	104	21	137	112	33

Similar to the above commentary breakdown this section also separates the comments into the three types, but this time by the participants' race (i.e., white, non-white). Across all three categories (i.e., ascribed attributes, job fit, hiring recommendation), white participants gave black qualified candidates 112 positive comments, 28 negative comments, and 30 comments needing more information about

the applicant. These same participants gave white qualified candidates 109 positive comments, 18 negative comments, and 21 comments stating the need for more information to make a decision. For black unqualified candidates, white participants gave 53 positive comments, 89 negative comments, and 19 comments stating the need for more applicant information to make a decision. For the white unqualified candidates, white participants gave 76 positive comments, 59 negative comments, and 20 comments stating the need for more applicant information to aid in the decision-making process. By race, whites gave blacks 165 positive comments, 117 negative comments, and 49 for the lack of applicant information to make a decision. Conversely, whites were given 185 positive comments, 77 negative comments, and 41 comments stating a decision could not be made without more information.

As for the non-white participants, a primary Latino (67%) and black (15%) composition, they gave the black qualified candidate 47 positive comments, 10 negative comments, and 17 comments stating the need for more information to make a decision. The white qualified candidate received 62 positive comments, 3 negative comments, and 17 comments needing more information on the applicant. The black unqualified candidate was given 23 positive comments, 32 negative comments, and 11 comments stating lack of information on the job applicant. Lastly, non-white participants gave the white unqualified candidate 36 positive comments, 38 negative comments, and 6 comments on lack of applicant information. By race, black candidates received 70 positive comments, 42 negative comments, and 28 comments stating the need for more information to make a decision. White candidates received 98 positive comments, 41

negative comments, and 23 comments indicating lack of applicant information. Table 9 provides a numerical breakdown of white and non-white commentary.

As highlighted previously, there were 290 participants (mock hiring committee) who filled out questionnaires, and each questionnaire had three sections to include personal responses to elaborate on reasoning for answer choices. Since most participants utilized these short response sections, the final tally of responses was 815 (highlighted above). Furthermore, it was also noted that many participants did not just give a single comment when responding; in many cases these responses included a variety of comments, some positive, some negative, and others indicating more applicant information was needed to make a decision, with many responses including a combination of the three. Because of this variation, responses were further broken down in the different ways in which these participants commented on these candidates. This method allowed for a more accurate depiction as to how participants came to their decisions. The patterns uncovered suggest this was a very logical approach to take.

**Table 9** *Positive, Negative, and More Information Needed Responses by Applicant Race and Qualifications and Race of Participant*

			White Participant			Non-White Participant		
			Pos	Neg	Need Info	Pos	Neg	Need Info
Attributes	Black Coach	Qualified	41	4	20	20	2	9
		Unqualified	20	20	13	13	4	8
		Total	61	24	33	33	6	17
	White Coach	Qualified	38	4	13	19	1	9
		Unqualified	31	13	11	15	9	4
		Total	69	17	24	34	10	13
	Total	Qualified	79	8	33	39	3	18
		Unqualified	51	33	24	28	13	12
		Total	130	41	57	67	16	30
Job Fit	Black Coach	Qualified	40	9	4	16	4	4
		Unqualified	20	35	0	6	14	1
		Total	60	44	4	22	18	5
	White Coach	Qualified	41	1	3	23	1	6
		Unqualified	24	25	3	14	15	0
		Total	65	26	6	37	16	6
	Total	Qualified	81	10	7	39	5	10
		Unqualified	44	60	3	20	29	1
		Total	125	70	10	59	34	11
Hiring Recommendation	Black Coach	Qualified	31	15	6	11	4	4
		Unqualified	13	34	6	4	14	2
		Total	44	49	12	15	18	6
	White Coach	Qualified	30	9	5	20	1	2
		Unqualified	21	21	6	7	14	2
		Total	51	30	11	27	15	4
	Total	Qualified	61	24	11	31	5	6
		Unqualified	34	55	12	11	28	4
		Total	95	79	23	42	33	10

What these above numbers suggest is that overall blacks, regardless of qualifications, are looked at less positively and more negatively than whites. And although both white and black candidates were viewed similarly positive by white and non-white participants within their respective qualification categories, white participants were harsher on both qualified and unqualified blacks than non-white participants were.

The primary objective of Chapter IV was to tend to the exploratory questions put forward by outlining results to set the stage for the subsequent chapter. Findings in both Parts I and II deliberately lacked in explanation, since Chapter V will go into more depth in interpreting results. Chapter V will not only expand on the statistical conclusions and numerical descriptions, but will also bring together Parts I and II to demonstrate their connection and offer further elaboration to the key themes uncovered from participants' (mock hiring committee) comments included on the questionnaire used in Part II. Thus, Chapter V will attempt to make sense of the quantitative and qualitative results by illuminating key themes and their connections to the literature, point out limitations of the current study, and offer theoretical and practical directions for change.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Black head coaches in the collegiate athletic setting are severely underrepresented, while white coaches continue to disproportionately dominate on a large scale. Much attention has been brought to the condition black coaches are experiencing, but the problem persists. Perhaps one of the concerns is the theoretical approaches that have been applied to understanding the racial issues in college sport. Such frameworks, guided by the researchers' epistemologies, have neglected to recognize race and racism as fundamental elements needing to be the center of the discussion (Singer, 2005a). As a result, when examining the racial inequality in college athletics many of the theories utilized lack an agenda to interrogate the powerful whites who control the institution of sport and make the hiring decisions, while also minimizing the focus and severity of the race problem (Oglesby & Schrader, 2000) and lack recognition that sport is a functioning piece of the larger racialized economic and political environments (Frisby, 2005). Minimizing racism and the scope of its impact sends a message that sport is a unique institution, one where its issues are independent from society at large. This is problematic since sport can be viewed as a microcosm of society, reflecting its ideals, hierarchies, and its systemic problems (see Edwards, 1973; Sage & Eitzen, 2013).

Guided by systemic racism theory (Feagin, 2006), this chapter expands on the findings in Chapter IV. Additionally, this chapter brings together Parts I and II to



demonstrate their connection. Finally, further elaboration to participants' (mock hiring committee) comments included in the questionnaire used in Part II are thematically outlined to expound on the white-black racial dichotomy that exists in the leadership structure of college football.

## **Making Sense of the Findings**

### *FBS Coach Comparisons*

Overall, FBS findings show that white and black coaches performed no differently in every performance category (The numerical differences were not statistically significant) (see Table 1). What makes this most disconcerting is white coaches control almost ten times more head coach positions than black coaches, yet their performances in previous seasons do not merit such overrepresentation. Considering these similar performance comparisons between black and white coaches, and the fact that blacks are overrepresented on the playing field and almost completely absent as head coaches, suggests something more disturbing is happening in college athletics.

With winning being the most important standard in NCAA Division I college football and coach compensation directly related to winning percentage (e.g., Grant, Leadley, & Zygmunt, 2013), no difference in wins and bowl appearances suggests athletic directors see white coaches as more deserving than black coaches to receive these financial rewards and thus continue to reproduce them in the highest coaching position in college athletics. This means that when black and white coaches are not significantly outperforming one another and whites are selected an overwhelming majority of the time to fill head coach jobs, higher standards are presumed to be placed

on blacks if they are to be chosen over whites. This perhaps speaks more to the embedded negative framing (e.g., stereotypes, prejudices) whites tend to harbor that inclines them to view blacks more negatively and whites more positively and thus lead to discriminatory actions (e.g., Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Feagin, 2013; Feagin & O'Brien, 2003).

### *FCS Coach Comparisons*

Overall, FCS performance comparisons demonstrate no statistically significant differences between white and black coaches. Interestingly, though, black coaches outperformed whites in four of the five performance categories, with white coaches slightly edging out black coaches in previous season (2013) playoff appearances (see Table 2). Similar to the FBS findings highlighted previously, no evidence was found that warrants athletic directors to continue reproducing white head coaches so disproportionately. It is understood that the FCS is not part of the big powerhouse FBS, but both are NCAA Division I football institutions. This makes it even more troubling, since at the highest level of college athletics black coaches cannot seem to make headway even when they are performing well. Because black student-athletes are overrepresented and black coaches underrepresented, the FCS's hiring practices are deemed just as inequitable as those in the FBS. Comparable to the FBS, this suggests that when black and white coaches are performing similarly and whites are selected an overwhelming majority of the time to fill head coach jobs, standards of comparison for black and white coaches are not the same.

### *Division II Football Coach Comparisons*

Division II performance comparisons of wins for the previous football season (2013) show that black and white coaches, similar to their performances in the FCS and FBS, are no different in actual coaching performance. There is a slight gap – white over black – in playoff appearances during the 2013 football season, but with only twenty-four teams able to make a playoff bid it is difficult to say how substantial this is when there are 167 teams vying for a post-season bid (see Table 3). Furthermore, NCAA Division II college football is an afterthought when discussing college football since all the top players, best coaches, most money, and extensive television coverage exists almost entirely at the Division I level. What is interesting, however, is to discover that even in a division where the stakes are not high and black and white coaches are demonstrating no differences in performance outcomes, the majority white athletic directors (Lapchick et al., 2013) are still reproducing white head coaches. While black head coach numbers are higher than for Division I, their marginal representation suggests that black coaches must still outperform white coaches in a significant manner if they are to land a head football coach job.

This is even more revealing of the white racial framing of black coaches since these athletic directors are doubtless in the same white social networks that frame black men this way. As DiTomaso (2013) demonstrates, much of the ‘cause’ of all of this is the exclusive white networks in getting most whites jobs over their careers, which illustrates merit is not the reality, but rather white favoritism in white networks.

Although not proven in sport (yet), DiTomaso's findings suggest the causality works for coaching.

#### *2012 FBS Black Coaches versus White Predecessors*

These findings are a bit distressing. Fifteen black coaches enter the FBS coaching ranks replacing fifteen white coaches, they set an all-time record numerical high in coaching numbers in 2012, and they outperformed (not significantly) whites in every category (except final year wins), but as soon as they had a down year they were replaced (see Table 4). This is substantial, given the comparison of white and blacks' length of tenure was the only statistically significant result. This demonstrates that when white coaches had a down year they were allowed to stay in their positions for a longer period of time; however, when black coaches were doing well they remained at their posts, but as soon as they produced a mediocre season performance they were terminated. Similar to all the previous findings in the various divisions, these outcomes confirm that black coaches are held to different standards compared to white coaches. Again, the systemic racism of exclusive white social networks is seemingly responsible for the favoritism that most whites continue to benefit from.

#### *2012 Terminated FBS Black Coaches versus White Successors*

Since the coaches in these analyses are the same coaches as in the previous section, this section is considered to be a continuation from the last. The take away here is that while these few black head coaches lost their jobs at the conclusion of the 2012 season after a less than par performance, the first season performance of white coaches who succeeded them did not demonstrate they were better coaches. As in the previous

findings showing black and white performances were similar yet black coaches were terminated much sooner than their white predecessors, the white successors of these black coaches are also shown to be similar in performance (see Table 5). It seems athletic directors can tolerate white coaches not performing well for a longer period of time than black coaches not performing well. When this tolerance level reaches its breaking point with black coaches, athletic directors return to their reproducing ways by replacing black coaches with similarly performing white coaches. Again, because standards of comparison are different between black and white head coaches, blacks must perform significantly better than whites in order to compete with whites and to keep their jobs. In the end, however, findings suggest whites prefer and protect clones of themselves.

#### *Black versus White Head Coach Job Candidates*

Statistical results in Part II clearly show that qualifications are important during the hiring process, since both qualified black and white head coach candidates were seen as more favorable than their unqualified counterparts (see Figure 2). However, these outcomes showed a different variation when comparing white and black applicants with equal qualifications. Whether unqualified or qualified, when compared to blacks, white applicants were consistently seen as more ideal for the job (see Table 6). These findings are similar to those found in Part I. When black and white coaches demonstrate no meaningful differences in performance (qualifications in Part II), whites are selected an overwhelming majority of the time. Additionally, to some extent, it is evident that mediocrity (in performance and qualifications) is a better quality to have for whites than

blacks. This is the case since whites control more coaching positions even when they do not perform well or perform no better than blacks, and they are viewed more positively, a good fit, and receive hiring recommendation over blacks when they are not qualified for the job. Furthermore, because whites are perceived as better candidates than blacks even when they both possess the necessary qualifications for the job, which results in more hiring recommendations, confirms standards of evaluation towards blacks are different when compared to whites.

Participant responses in Part II are consistent with the above results and suggestions. As uncovered in the previous chapter, black coach candidates received more negative comments than white coach candidates by participants (mock hiring committee), regardless of qualifications (see Table 8). More interesting, though, was the allocation of comments by particular members of the hiring committee. As shown, when comparing white to non-white participants' comments both groups viewed qualified and unqualified candidates similarly positive in their respective qualification categories, while white participants were much harsher on black candidates (see Table 9). This negativity toward blacks resulted in slightly more qualified whites viewed as a better fit and received hiring recommendation than their black counterparts; more troubling, however, a much greater number of unqualified whites were viewed as a good fit and received hiring recommendation than their black counterparts. Consistent with the above findings, performance and qualifications seem to be more important for blacks than whites. To the detriment to blacks, white gatekeepers in sport seem to put greater emphasis on race when performance and qualifications are similar. For instance, in her

explanation as to why she would not hire the unqualified black candidate, this white female said:

*“He’s unqualified, and it would be a waste of money to hire him, and also a mistake.”*

Conversely, another white female made this comment about hiring the white unqualified candidate.

*“I think people need a chance to prove they will be a good candidate. He might be the best head coach in college football.”*

While this contrast is not indicative of the majority of responses it does shed light on how several whites found it reasonable to give whites an opportunity, while simultaneously making it clear that if you are not qualified and you are black those chances do not exist in college football coaching.

Bringing Parts I and II together, a clear commonality shows that performance and qualifications are important, but the standard as to how they are applied is more significant when considering race. Another similarity amongst the two parts is those who numerically influence the hiring decision-making are white. While the athletic director ultimately makes the final head coach hire/fire decision, an overwhelming majority white hiring committee also likely has a devastating impact on blacks. These gatekeepers not only dictate the fate of blacks in the hiring process, but are also responsible in white reproduction and the maintenance of a white hierarchy in college athletics.

The following sections, in conjunction with the findings in the current study, through a systemic racism theoretical lens (Feagin, 2006), will take a deeper look into how whites as gatekeepers serve as both the standard bearers and racial reproducers in the hiring process within and outside of sport.

### **Gatekeepers: Setting the Standards and Reproducing Whiteness**

It is evident the limited access blacks face in college coaching is persistently problematic. This issue, however, is not unique to sport since employment discrimination is a sociological concern systemic throughout society (Mong & Roscigno, 2010). Whether discussing the lack of promotional opportunities (Baldi & McBrier, 1997), the wage gap (Grodsky & Pager, 2001), the control over economic resources (Smith, 2001), unemployment (Wilson, Tienda, & Wu, 1995), or occupational prestige and segregation (Xu & Leffler, 1992), what has stood the test of time is blacks are disproportionately affected compared to whites. These historical-to-contemporary racially discriminatory practices have thus ensured whites would remain in control of every major influential institution throughout the US (Feagin, 2006, 2014).

This institutional domination is evident in politics, where whites are represented at almost 85% as congressional members (“Members of Congress,” 2012); in education, where whites makeup 87% of college presidents (“Leading Demographic Portrait,” 2012); in economic institutions, where whites control 95% of the CEO roles in Fortune 500 companies (“Where’s the Diversity,” 2014); and in college athletics, where whites serve as athletic directors at over 90% in both NCAA Division I and II (Lapchick et al., 2013). Because whites (and especially white males) are overrepresented in such a



lopsided way, they have the exclusive power to dictate who will fill other influential leadership roles. These powerful whites, as well as those who are entrusted to perform similar tasks (e.g., hiring committees; human resource recruiters, resume screeners), are referred to as gatekeepers. According to Mitchell (2003), these latter gatekeepers often serve as the barrier between applicants and the individual who will perhaps make the final hiring decision.

In the current study the gatekeepers are the athletic directors in Part I, while the mock hiring committee plays the gatekeeping role in Part II. In an attempt to understand how these potential gatekeepers decide the fate of both whites and blacks in the college coaching context, the following sections will highlight how these whites framed, determined fit for the head coach position, and decided if the candidates were hireable.

Most of the quotes illustrated in the following sections will reflect those of the white participants. While black and white unqualified candidates received lower ratings in all categories (i.e., ascribed attributes, job fit, hiring recommendations) than their qualified counterparts, both unqualified and qualified blacks received lower ratings than white candidates at the same qualification levels (see Figure 2). Interestingly, though, it was shown that white participants (compared to their non-white counterparts) were more inconsistent with their negative ratings toward black candidates than they were with white job candidates (see Table 9). As indicated previously, negative responses are inevitable since an unqualified candidate not being perceived as a good fit or receiving a hiring recommendation were tallied as negative comments. The difference, however, is when taking a closer look at the varying ratings by white mock hiring committee

members toward black and white candidates in each qualification category, the reality of differential framing, qualification standards, and favoritism are uncovered. For these reasons, the following sections will place primary emphasis on comments by white participants to display these inconsistencies.

### *Framing: The White-Black Dichotomy*

#### **Leadership is Primarily a White Quality**

In ascribing attributes toward both the black and white unqualified candidates, the interesting trend was the focus on the leadership characteristics of the applicants. While both black and white candidates received positive leadership comments, not only did whites receive an overwhelming majority of such comments but the black applicant was the only one whose leadership was questioned. Although this white female decided the white candidate was unqualified for the position, she made a point to highlight his positive qualities.

*“He has accomplished a lot, however he does not have a masters and he played/coached at a division II School. The responsibilities and stakes are higher at a division I school. However, he did manage a store for seven years which takes a lot of leadership, reliability and discipline.”*

Similarly, this white female emphasized the limited information on the applicant and his lack of qualifications, but his leadership was revered.

*“I can’t get a lot of information from just the four bullets [on his experience], but I believe he is a leader because he was a manager for*

*seven years. I believe that he is less motivated because he didn't attempt to get more qualified."*

This white female also thought there was not enough information on the applicant to make an accurate assessment, except for his leadership.

*"He is a leader due to the fact that he managed a store for seven years. I feel that I can't judge the other categories because I've never seen him in a working situation."*

This white male believed the unqualified white candidate had all the necessary positive characteristics, including leadership.

*"[He's] probably hardworking, reliable, disciplined, and a leader because of the management position. [He] seems motivated just because he is applying for a head coach position."*

Although these gatekeepers on the mock hiring committee rated the white unqualified candidate low, suggesting he was not the ideal person for the position (compared to qualified counterparts), they all made sure to point out that he has leadership qualities because of his years spent as a sport store manager. This seems to suggest that while these individuals knew this candidate was not the right person for the job, they framed their assessment both subtly and kindly. For instance, of the eleven negative comments white participants reported on this unqualified white candidate, if they did not revere his leadership, they included other positive commentary; for example, one participant stated the applicant was not that bad but just not impressive, while another suggested he may just need to be given the opportunity to thrive.

## **Black Leadership?**

The above patterns towards the white unqualified candidate were consistent throughout much of the ascription process. Conversely, not only was the black unqualified candidate's leadership questioned, in many cases it was the primary reason for not selecting him for the job. For instance, this white male stated bluntly:

*"He has no problem holding a job, but lacks leadership."*

As demonstrated above, the white candidate's management position at the sporting goods store was a main reason for his leadership qualities. Interestingly, some white participants suggested the black applicant's management experience was a reason for his lack of leadership. One white male made this very clear.

*"Someone that worked at any job for seven years must be somewhat reliable and pleasant but not much of a leader, because after all it was a sporting goods store."*

This white male even suggested the black candidate's work experience made him more of a follower than a leader.

*"He is disciplined enough to attend school for an undergrad and maintain a job; however, his jobs required him to take direction but not give direction."*

Other whites saw the management position as a positive, but just not quite enough to be a leader. For instance, this white female stated:

*"I assume that he is a follower, because he has not been in any leadership position beyond a manager. He is always second-in-charge and being*

*employed at a store after getting a degree makes me believe he is unmotivated.”*

It should not be too surprising that a very unqualified candidate would receive questionable remarks concerning leadership characteristics deemed important for the high-level position he is applying for. The primary concern, however, is these comments were only targeted at the black applicant. Perhaps this can help to explain why there are an overwhelming majority of white head coaches in the collegiate football coaching ranks, even though many of them are not performing well. This goes back to standards gatekeepers (e.g., athletic directors, hiring committees) place on whites compared to blacks; if they perform comparatively, regardless of the level, whites will more often be selected to lead the football program.

What is very troubling is when blacks are more than qualified to fill an NCAA Division I head football coach position, these potential gatekeepers still find a way to question their ability to lead. This was the case with the qualified black candidate in this final quote. While the leadership of the qualified white candidate was not subjected to any leadership criticisms, one white female did not rate this qualified black candidate well and she also made this comment:

*“Although he worked three different leading jobs, his picture seems to be smirking; he may be a tiny bit arrogant.”*

### **Other Character “Flaws”**

The previous subsection makes it obvious that the leadership of black candidates, qualified or unqualified, are not free of white condemnations. Leadership, however, is

only one aspect of criticism blacks faced and whites did not. Whites on the hiring committee also seem to be okay with ascribing other character “flaws” to black candidates but not whites, indicating they are not the ideal applicant to fill the position. For instance, even with all the necessary credentials to fill the Division I head coach role, this white female found the reliability of the qualified black candidate questionable.

*“I would say this applicant is a motivated, hard working person because of his history in this profession. I can’t say he’s super reliable because it seems like he’s job-hopped a lot.”*

Another white female extends on this commentary, but adds a little speculation.

*“Since he only coached at a university for no more than 4 years, there must have been something that made him leave or get fired.”*

While these two hiring committee members questioned the qualified candidate’s job record to explain why they rated him low, others took it a step further and targeted his physical appearance to explain their low score. For instance, a white female added:

*“He looks like he has ‘crazy eyes’; I’m sure he’s worked hard to have his credentials but something’s not sitting right.”*

Even though this job applicant was well prepared educationally and professionally to move into a Division I head coach position, these three white committee members found it necessary to point out a “flaw.” One suggesting he may have been fired from his previous job, another claiming unreliability, and the last contending “something’s just not sitting right” with this candidate, illustrates a common

theme experienced by blacks seeking employment: negative ascribed characteristics that have the potential to serve as job access and promotional barriers.

Outside of sport, several studies (e.g., Moss & Tilly 2001; Waldinger & Lichter 2003) have shown the prevalence of negative attributes (e.g., lazy, unmotivated, unreliable) held towards black job seekers and employees by white employers. More recently, Pager and Karafin (2009) revealed white employers perceived black job seekers and their own black employees as having a lack of work ethic, inappropriate self-presentation, and more intimidating than their white employees. Even more troubling is the work of Timkiewicz, Brenner, and Adeyemi-Bello (1998), where they found that negative stereotypes toward blacks held by white top managers have grave impact on the lack of mobility for blacks; these authors showed, as a result of white middle managers rating both blacks and whites, whites were perceived to have more attributes commonly associated with the characteristics of managers. The framing runs in networks, it is collective (see DiTomaso, 2013)

These finding are similar to the current study, where whites on the hiring committee tended to ascribe more positive characteristics toward white than black applicants, suggesting that whites were more suited to lead than blacks. Again, this goes back to the standards gatekeepers place on whites compared to blacks; with comparative qualifications and performances, whites tend to be viewed more favorably and selected more often to lead football programs. When blacks are hired to run top collegiate programs, a drop off in performance, even when their overall performance equals or

betters whites', leads to white athletic directors firing these coaches (as found in Part I of the current study).

The next section examines how the hiring committee determined the applicants' fit for the position. Similar to the previous examples, the following section differentiates the acquisition of commentary for both white and black head coach candidates.

### *Race Matters for Job Fit*

#### **Lower Standards for Unqualified Whites**

When examining the differences found between qualified and unqualified candidates, qualifications appear to be important. This was clear at all levels of evaluation (i.e., ascribed attributes, good fit for job, recommend to hire) by the hiring committee (see Figure 2). However, when taking a closer look at candidates within qualification groups, race was shown to be important in the evaluation process. For instance, many white committee members lowered their standards for the unqualified white candidate to fit the head coach position.

#### *He's Good Enough...*

One white female's language seems to indicate the unqualified white candidate is right for the job, but ultimately deciding he deserves a chance suggests she knows he may not be qualified for the position.

*"The candidate has sports education, playing experience, and coaching experience. He seems to be a good fit. I like to give underdogs chances. They will shock you sometimes."*



Or this white male recognized this same candidate is not qualified, but not a poor match either.

*“He has none of the requirements for the job, but he isn’t necessarily a poor match since he’s devoted his life to sports.”*

This same sentiment was echoed by others as well. Take this white female’s comment, for instance.

*“He dealt a lot with Division II and is trying for a Division I, only has bachelor’s degree, but he doesn’t seem a bad fit for it either.”*

Other whites have also indicated the white candidate did not quite meet the requirements for the position, but in the end determined he was good enough.

*“It seems like he needs more experience on paper, but he may actually have the ability to do the job.”*

Similarly, this white female reasoned:

*“He doesn’t meet all of the qualifications but shows dedication and persistence.”*

Two other white committee members stated qualifications are not everything.

White male:

*“He doesn’t have the qualifications on paper but how he actually works could be different.”*

White female:

*“Experience doesn’t equal talent or abilities in every case.”*

These white committee members do not have a good reason as to why this unqualified candidate is a good fit, but they try to illustrate the best they can that he may not be that bad of a match. These same attitudes were shared by other hiring committee members, yet they pointed out a specific flaw of the candidate they were willing to overlook (i.e., education) or indicated other potential benefits they could bring to the program (i.e., experience).

#### *Overlooking Education Requirements*

Some participants acknowledged the unqualified white applicant lacked the necessary education requirement for the job, but were willing to overlook this in order to highlight his fit for the position. This white female contended the applicant's experience is more important than his education.

*“This applicant is on his way to having all preferred credentials for position. His experience as a player leads me to slightly look past not having a master’s degree.”*

Another white female made a similar argument.

*“He might not have a Master’s, but he has a lot of knowledge/experience in the field.”*

#### *Praising Inadequate Credentials*

The above findings show that committee members knew the applicant did not meet the position requirements, but ignored some deficiencies to indicate the fit of the candidate. Several others rated the unqualified white candidate above average because of his credentials, even though these qualifications were not up to par or compatible with

the position. Most of these comments were short and to the point. For instance, one white female stated:

*“His track record looks good.”*

A white male participant suggested his coaching and playing experience makes the candidate a good fit.

*“The applicant has experience with the NCAA league in both coaching and playing.”*

Another white female proposed why this unqualified candidate is perfect for the job.

*“He seems perfect for the job, given his credentials and what is expected of him.”*

This white female argued his business experience makes this applicant a good fit for the job.

*“He definitely has the right background and because he’s been in the business world, will know how to generate revenue.”*

And with no other explanation, this white female said:

*“He seems like a good choice!”*

Lower standards towards the unqualified white candidate were indicative of the above comments. Even though the candidate did not have the necessary qualifications for the position, white mock committee members were willing to overlook particular job requirements, praised credentials that did not meet the standards for the position, or simply perceived the coach to be good enough to do the job. This is the power of those holding the gatekeeper role.

Based on the many negative comments made towards the unqualified black applicant (see Table 8), there is a complete perception reversal. However, instead of identifying this obvious black-white dichotomy of unqualified candidates, it may be more interesting to see this role reversal targeting the qualified black applicant. The next section will highlight the high standards placed on blacks, standards that are misplaced since the applicant is fully qualified to fill the position.

### **Higher Standards for Qualified Blacks**

As discussed and demonstrated in Part I of the current study, black coaches are held to higher standards than white coaches. Whites not only numerically control the institution of college athletics, but it was found that when black coaches replace white coaches they tend to perform better, but also have shorter tenures and more often replaced by white coaches. Findings in Part II also showed blacks are held to higher standards compared to whites. Interestingly, while unqualified white candidates are seen as a more ideal coach than their black counterparts, these same whites' experience is praised just as much as qualified black candidates' experience is questioned.

#### *Fully Qualified with "Questionable" Experience*

Even though the qualified black candidate was shown to be fully qualified, with all the necessary experience and education, one white male on the mock hiring committee argued his "lack" of experience can hurt the recruiting process.

*"His only downfall is his years of experience, and he hasn't been to too many schools so his connections for recruiting may not be spectacular."*

Even more interesting, two other committee members suggested that the qualified black applicant lacks head coach experience at the Division I level, even though that was not a requirement and this individual was a Division II head coach for four years, an assistant coach in Division I for four years, and a coordinator (a feeder position to the head coach position) for another two years.

White male:

*“The only qualification missing is DI head coach experience.”*

White female:

*“I’d prefer someone with DI head coaching experience, but he has offensive coaching and fits other requirements. This makes him a good, but not a great fit.”*

Another two mock committee members made it clear that this applicant was qualified and a good fit, but someone with more experience may be a better fit. For instance, this white female suggested:

*“I think he is a really good fit for the job, but there could also be someone better out there with more experience and knowledge.”*

A white male felt a coach from the professional ranks of football should be considered.

*“Between coaching and playing at the college level the candidate seems qualified, although someone with NFL experience would possibly be a better fit.”*

While a similar pattern continued throughout the “fit” evaluation, a few committee members decided to target this qualified applicant’s experience by indirectly questioning his character. This was precisely the case with this white female.

*“He is very qualified with experience, but because he has so many past experiences. It brings into question why it didn’t work out at the other previous positions.”*

Others were not so subtle in their targeting of this qualified black candidate’s character. Stated bluntly, this white female did not hold back.

*“He has all the credentials, but then again he looks untrustworthy.”*

What has been common is these white mock committee members recognized the black candidate had all the qualifications and was fit for the position, but they found a way to make him unfit. These participants questioned his years of experience, no previous Division I experience, the potential of a better coach to fill the job, or the targeting of his character. These are surprising findings, given this candidate has coached and played football for fourteen years. Recalling the praise and the benefit of doubt the unqualified white candidate received for having a lack of experience, makes these participants’ comments aimed at this qualified black applicant’s experience a racial concern.

This dual racial and qualification dichotomy points again at the higher standard argument. Black head coaches at all levels of collegiate football are disproportionately underrepresented compared to white coaches, even though findings show they perform no different. And while many black coaches are shown to perform somewhat better than whites (although not significantly), they lose their jobs significantly sooner than whites when they do not perform well and replaced by white coaches who perform no better. Although these findings are not exactly parallel to the performance comparisons between

white and black coaches (in Part I), they highlight common themes: whites are viewed more favorably than blacks, standards of excellence (performance and qualifications) are lower for whites, and in order for blacks to be viewed favorably by white gatekeepers (athletic director and hiring committee) they must perform significantly better and have qualifications that more than exceed what is required for the job.

The systemic nature of this problem extends to the National Football League (NFL), where Madden (2004) found black coaches are the last hired and first fired. Similar to Part I and Part II of the current study, Madden discovered that black coaches, even when they outperform white coaches, are held to higher standards since they lose their jobs sooner than whites. The underrepresentation of black coaches in the NFL suggests these higher performing coaches are less sought after compared to their white counterparts, and thus higher standards apply towards these individuals in the hiring process as well (see Duru, 2011).

The above findings are no different than what has been experienced by blacks in other work environments. For instance, in their investigation of performance appraisals for both black and white managers, Cox and Nkomo (1986) found the presence of covert discrimination since white participants would hold black managers to higher standards by rating them tougher than their white counterparts. Additionally, Mong and Roscigno (2010) found blacks are held to higher standards compared to whites for workplace violations in various industries, resulting in poor performance evaluations, demotions, and even firing. Moreover, the various racial audit studies that have surfaced over the years (e.g., Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; James & DelCastillo, 1991; Turner, Fix, &

Struyk, 1991; Wells, 2013) continue to indicate that even when white and black candidates possess similar credentials in applying for a particular job, gatekeepers are presumed to hold blacks to higher standards compared to their white counterparts since they receive less call backs, interviews, and selection for the job.

The next section will take the interpretations of these findings to the next level. While the previous section centered on the different standards placed on black and white candidates to evaluate their fit for the head coach position, the following section will uncover hiring committee reasoning for their differential hiring recommendations.

#### *Getting Hired: More than Qualifications when you're Black*

The two previous sections uncovered some very disturbing findings. The first section – “Framing: The White-Black Dichotomy” – demonstrated that even when unqualified, leadership qualities of whites were often admired. What is most interesting was the black candidate who had the same qualifications was viewed as lacking leadership, among other character “flaws,” by many white mock hiring committee members. The second section – “Race Matters for Job Fit” – shined a vivid light on the low standards placed on unqualified white job applicants, while indicating the higher standards placed on qualified blacks. This second section was very enlightening, for it showed how blacks, even when they have an extensive career putting them in a perfect position to head a Division I football program, white participants still found a way to make this candidate unfit for the job. In order to determine how mock hiring committee members decided this same black qualified applicant was potentially not hireable, the current section reveals their responses.



Since one of the primary objectives of this study was to interrogate potential gatekeepers as to how they have come to their hiring decisions concerning white and black job applicants, the previous sections only illustrated white hiring committee commentary. This section will take a somewhat different direction. Although white comments will continue to be primary, the few non-white explanations will also be shown to explicate that not only do whites overwhelmingly depict blacks as unhirable but they are also a bit harsher in their decision-making.

Because white participants (63%) outnumber non-white participants (37%) in Part II of the current study, it seems feasible that negative commentary from white participants would be numerically greater than those of non-whites. However, with fifteen of nineteen negative comments (75%) made by whites toward the qualified black candidate (see Table 9), and the fact that these comments were comparatively different in substance, makes this section worth revealing how such hiring decisions were made.

### **Concerned with Character and References**

Even though the black qualified candidate had an extraordinary track record of playing and coaching experience, several white mock hiring committee members were more concerned with the applicant's character before they could make a decision on hiring. For instance, one white female suggested:

*“Based on experience alone he seems fit for the job, but I don't know his character... he could be rude, etc.”*

Another white female gave a similar explanation as to why she did not rate this applicant high in the hiring category.

*“Although the individual seems qualified on paper, his personal traits might not be fit for the position.”*

Another white female indicated more is needed on this applicant’s character, and proposed a face-to-face meeting and references could help in her decision to hire.

*“I would need to meet the individual and judge his character based on references and credentials.”*

Other whites continued to insist on getting to know the candidate and obtaining references before a decision could be made.

*“He is extremely qualified, but anyone can make themselves look good on paper. For this job you need to look at previous team results and recommendation letters by past co-workers.”*

Similarly,

*“I think you would need more references and to get to know the applicant to know if he was good for the job.”*

Inspecting one’s character to determine if they may or may not be hireable is not necessarily a bad thing. After all, that is what the interview process is for. However, based on the given information on the black qualified candidate, none of the non-white committee members proposed a hiring decision cannot be made because of lack of character knowledge. Additionally, requesting recommendation letters and references was not a requirement for any of the non-white committee; even more interesting, this same request by the white committee was not demanded of the white qualified applicant.

The closest the non-white committee came in requiring more information on the black applicant before rendering a hiring decision was:

*“Should get to know him better.”* (black female)

Or this Native American female highlighting the importance of coaching style.

*“Head coach is more than just fitting the qualifications, its being great at your job and representing the university. To hire this coach I would need to know more than qualifications. Need to know coaching style.”*

Similarly, this Hispanic male made the argument of results and coaching style.

*“[Qualifications] on paper does not work for this type of work, results and style on those positions is more important when talking sports.”*

This differential treatment by white and non-white mock committee members toward the qualified black candidate leads one to wonder what the few black head coaches on PWIHE campuses have to endure, considering they are surrounded by a majority of white students, administrators, faculty, and coaches. Given the stress levels these black coaches must be experiencing due to racial framing, higher standards, and the regular pressures to perform in a big-time college athletic program, it is surprising they are performing comparable to their white counterparts. While only speculation, a potential reason some black head football coaches are amongst the best coaches in all college football (e.g., David Shaw at Stanford University) is because they are surrounded by other black influential leaders (Stanford has a black head basketball coach and a black athletic director), which perhaps minimizes the stress they would normally have to put up

with in a typical white-dominant environment of most PWIHE athletic departments.

### **A Better Applicant Out There?**

Another common theme that surfaced was the black qualified applicant was not qualified enough, resulting in several white committee members to suggest a better applicant may exist. Again, this is very surprising since the candidate met and exceeded all the required credentials. Nevertheless, as discussed many times before, blacks continue to be held to higher standards. Unfortunately, such standards continue to hamper access, promotion, and length of tenure of black head coaches in college football.

These first few white committee members argued that the black applicant lacked the required experience. For instance, this white female said:

*“He needs to get more coaching experience from Division I to be a head coach in this division.”*

Similarly, this white male contended the applicant’s qualifications were not fit for the head coach role.

*“While experienced, the candidate isn’t as prepared for a head coaching position as he is for an assistant position or coordinating position.”*

While other white committee members make no mention of experience, they did propose a decision cannot be made because there may be better applicants. One can infer that a better coaching option refers to someone with more experience; however, because this candidate is more than qualified to fill the head coach role, then one can only

speculate as to what more can be sought from an applicant. Regardless, this white female said:

*“Without knowing if there are candidates more suitable for the position I can’t directly recommend him.”*

Another white female acknowledged the qualified black candidate has all the requirements for the position, but made a similar argument as the previous committee member.

*“He has all that is asked for so he is a good option, but without knowing other options how do you know he’s right?”*

This white male shared a similar sentiment.

*“There is no apparent reason not to hire this person, unless he is less qualified than other candidates.”*

Similar to the previous comments this white female discussed other potential candidates, but took it a step further in explaining.

*“I wouldn’t recommend, I assume there are better options available who have had head coaching skills. Yet I wouldn’t think hiring him would be BAD because he has most qualifications. Again a good but not great fit.”*

These comments suggest qualifications are important, but even if you have them, according to these white committee members, there may be someone better out there.

This pattern speaks directly to the higher standards consistently found in these committee members’ responses. Even when blacks have all the necessary qualifications, compared to similar whites, they are typically critiqued more harshly and often do not

receive a comparable hiring recommendation. Perhaps this can be explained by what Bonilla-Silva (2014) refers to as the “white habitus”, which is an internalized character structure whites operate out of that generates discriminatory habits in everyday life. This can potentially be understood more clearly when recognizing that the qualified white candidate received only one response similar to the above, but in that response the white mock committee member made the argument that the win-loss record of another applicant may be better, not his qualifications.

These findings are analogous to those found in the previous sections. Although mock committee members in the first two sections were ascribing attributes and determining fit for the coaching position, this final section brings the previous sections together to indicate how whites will go to great lengths to find a way to make the black candidate unhirable. Since they hold a majority of the decision-making authority, the power of gatekeepers has functioned to reproduce whites while creating barriers for blacks. Part I of the current study has demonstrated this with blacks being numerically marginalized at the various levels of collegiate football, having significantly shorter tenures than whites, and whites being reproduced to fill the roles of terminated black coaches. Results in Part II were shown to be similar to those in Part I, except with a little more understanding of the potential reasoning behind the black marginality.

Sport, comparable to other institutions, continues to show the fate of black access and mobility is in the hands of white gatekeepers. The systemic nature of racial bias held by gatekeepers has been shown to be evident in their (mis)perceptions of negative characteristics possessed by blacks (e.g., Moss & Tilly 2001; Pager & Karafin, 2009;

Timkiewicz et al., 1998; Waldinger & Lichter 2003), which has and continues to serve as employment barriers for blacks compared to whites (e.g., Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Cox and Nkomo, 1986; James & DelCastillo, 1991; Turner, Fix, & Struyk, 1991; Wells, 2013), even when there are no known differences between candidates except their race. The current study demonstrates that racial standards and reproduction of head coaches in college football is not only similar to that in the NFL (e.g., Duru, 2011; Madden, 2004), but also a reflection of broader US society.

### **Limitations**

Like other research studies, the current study is not without limitations. One potential drawback of Part I was the assumption that the race of the athletic director was white. For instance, the current study interrogated white gatekeepers as the source of hiring and firing black coaches at the various levels (i.e., Division I and II) within NCAA collegiate athletic programs. This perhaps suggests that non-white athletic directors served no role in such decision-making. Without doing a more extensive examination of athletic directors and their tenures, which the current study did not do, it is not possible to say for certain that white athletic directors were the sole decision-makers in determining the fate of black coaches. However, considering the latest statistics put forward by Lapchick et al. (2013), white athletic directors are overrepresented in both Division I (90.0%) and Division II (90.9%) collegiate athletic programs. These numbers demonstrate that white athletic directors play a substantial role in the hiring and firing of head coaches, and thus interrogation of their role as gatekeepers in the outcome of black coaches in the current study is seemingly justified.

Another potential limitation was the use of college students as members of a mock hiring committee in Part II of the current study. This sample was one of convenience, and it did not represent that of a real hiring committee. Racially the committee was conceivably ideal; however, these participants were still in school, and several may not have been fully acquainted with hiring processes and/or familiar with college football. Although this can be seen as a weakness, one of the primary objectives of interrogating white decision-makers on how race and qualifications play a role in their hiring decisions was fulfilled. With findings in line with those demonstrated in a variety of sport and non-sport settings, this study makes a potential first step in better understanding how racialized decision-making by hiring committees could play out in a real sport setting.

## **Recommendations**

### *Theoretical Directions for Change*

The current study clearly demonstrated that the proposed theoretical framework – systemic racism theory (Feagin, 2006) - was ideal for examining and better understanding the black predicament in the leadership structure of college sport. As Ladson-Billings (2000) iterated, the environment in which we live and learn is how we come to know and understand the world. Because the prominent world-view has been primarily Eurocentric in nature, this perspective is entrenched in every major societal structure. This includes academia. As such, racially biased implications in scholarly endeavors have prevailed. This has been problematic, since the principal ways of viewing and examining racialized experiences throughout society have been distorted.



For the most part, these epistemologies have encouraged the use of theoretical frameworks in the research process that typically overlook the “real” black-white dichotomy that has and continuous to permeate society. Because this has been a limitation in the research process when attempting to understand the underrepresentation of blacks in the leadership structure of college athletics, the current study’s inclusion of systemic racism theory in this context strengthens and corrects the direction of the scholarship.

Because the realities of racism exists in every major institution throughout the United States (Feagin, 2006, 2014), institutions in which whites dominate numerically, economically and politically, then why should sport be viewed differently if the black condition is no different. The theoretical frameworks that have been put forward to examine the underrepresentation of blacks in athletic leadership suggests that the black experience is no different than other groups, since many of these theories are typically used to examine similar experiences of others (e.g., gender, disabled). The problem with this application is it erases the historical and contemporary experiences of blacks (e.g., slavery, legal segregation, contemporary society-wide institutional discrimination), and instead implies institutional discrimination can be explained the same way for all those who have to suffer it. By applying systemic racism theory to the current study, the objective was to propose that the black predicament in college sport leadership is not only different from others in related situations, but also parallel to the institutional racism blacks have to endure throughout society.

The systemic racism theoretical framework has the ability to examine the black experience from a multitude of angles. This theoretical examination highlights how whites have historically used and benefited from blacks for economic purposes; explains how whites have developed, maintained and rationalized their elite positioning throughout society; demonstrates the cost and burdens blacks continue to undergo in order for whites to preserve their societal control; and reveals the many ways blacks continue to resist racism. Systemic racism theory, unlike other frameworks, also centers white economic domination at its core. This strategic positioning suggests the problems of racism cannot be examined or fully understood if white elites are not interrogated. For this reason, one of the primary objectives of the current study was to probe into how and why white decision-makers and their appointed gatekeepers (i.e., hiring committee) come to their hiring decisions of white and black candidates. While not yet explored in the sport context, DiTomaso (2013) demonstrates that exclusive white networks are at the heart of how racial exclusion and white inclusion are systemic and institutionalized in employment – a white male buddy system that perpetuates the reproduction of whiteness.

The current study revealed black and white standards and reproduction were one-sided. Often holding white candidates to lower standards while simultaneously holding blacks to higher standards leads to reproducing whites at the expense of passing up on more qualified blacks. Feagin (2006, 2013, 2014) argues that blacks are consistently negatively framed by whites while whites are typically viewed more favorably, and such framing leads to discriminatory outcomes for blacks and more positive outcomes for

whites. This perspective played out in the current study, where blacks were adversely targeted throughout the attribution ascription process. As a result more blacks, both qualified and unqualified, were not seen as a good fit and did not receive comparable hiring recommendations as their white counterparts. Similarly, many whites were being reproduced by other whites on the hiring committee even when they were not qualified.

Although athletic directors were not directly interrogated in the current study, their patterns of firing black head coaches sooner than white coaches and replacing them with mediocre white coaches suggests perhaps athletic directors are framing black candidates similarly as whites on the mock hiring committee. After all, whites hold the overwhelming majority of both athletic director and head football coach positions. Regardless, the patterns in Parts I and II of the current study speak directly to systemic racism: the white majority holds the economic and decision-making power, they continue to reproduce whites even when blacks are shown to be no different or better (qualifications and performance) than whites, blacks face the costs of losing their jobs sooner if they do not outperform whites, black are framed as more undesirable than whites, and the unfortunate outcome is the maintenance of a white racial hierarchy. If scholars who research the issues blacks have to contend with in the leadership structure of college athletics approach the dilemma from a perspective that speaks directly to their condition (i.e., systemic racism), such a united front can perhaps be the much needed and important first step in the change process. Because these powerful white decision-makers in sport have yet to be interrogated directly, the current study has laid the basis for a study to achieve such an endeavor.

### *Practical Directions for Change*

The findings in the current study demonstrate the existence of systemic racism is a reality for blacks in the leadership structure of college sport. Although a primary objective was to propose a change in the theoretical framework in examining the black predicament in college sport, these data have the ability to influence policy. For instance, the findings indicate the use of hiring committees have the potential to produce positive outcomes. Given whites dominate as athletic directors - primary hiring entity for head football coaches - and whites are severely overrepresented as head coaches, even when they are not performing better than black coaches, suggests there is some racial bias playing out in the hiring process. Likewise, the current study demonstrated that whites on a hiring committee were shown to have racial bias in selecting a head football coach. Since these racial biases were not comparable to those of non-white committee members, the problem of black underrepresentation is not so much a committee problem as it is a white problem. For this reason, diverse hiring committees can play a significant role in changing the hiring dynamics within college sport leadership.

Since it is not realistic to conduct a racial overhaul of athletic directors in college athletics, which could create a change in the racial makeup of head football coaches since blacks are shown to resist their numerical marginalization by hiring more blacks (see Cunningham & Sagas, 2005), utilizing diverse hiring committees can perhaps create a more level playing field. Search committees that are diverse in both their racial makeup as well as consisting of members that are not solely athletics administrators and coaches can potentially aid in a fair selection process. The formation of hiring

committees that are diverse and offer assistance and advisement to the athletic director and coaches could function as an crucial step in a just direction, by breaking into white-only networks with real ‘positive action’ to make sure networks of hiring are diverse. The presence of historically marginalized groups on hiring committees, as Singer et al. (2010) have argued, could be essential to the hiring of minority head football coaches because

If search committees are lacking in the area of racial diversity (i.e., the committee is homogenous, consisting of all or mostly all whites and/or individuals who adopt a color blind, race neutral perspective), the perspectives and insights of racial minorities as well as whites who embrace diversity, particularly race consciousness, are muted when the search committee is discussing head coaching candidates, and making recommendations on which ones to invite for an interview (p. 282).

The hiring process should also include other important individuals. For instance, the university’s president should be an integral part in hiring committee formation and all hiring committee dialogue throughout the hiring process. Because most academic institutions have a mission statement that addresses the importance of inclusivity, it is also necessary to have the mission conveyed in the athletic department directly from the president if it is not being followed. Furthermore, because hiring decisions are typically made by the athletic director, conceivably there should be some discussion with the affirmative action officer preceding the final hiring decision. Inequitable hiring practices have been covertly carried out for years (see Benedict & Keteyian, 2013), since athletic

departments seem to be “exempt” from affirmative action policies. Perhaps there should be more contribution among the two entities (i.e., connection between affirmative action and the athletic department). An alliance as such can serve as a driving force in fairness of representation. While an ideal direction, affirmative action policies would most certainly be met with white resistance since, according to DiTomaso (2013), effective affirmative action programs have sought to weaken the institutionalized favoritism in the job market that whites have always benefited from. Nonetheless, Singer et al. (2010) contend “White people today might not be guilty of the discrimination that has been visited upon racial minorities in the past, but because they continue to benefit, they certainly have a responsibility to address the issue” (p. 287).

Because racial framing has the potential of leading to discriminatory hiring practices (Feagin, 2013), identification of and attending to personal biases, whether implicit or explicit, can help people take remedial actions and reduce the occurrence of discriminatory behavior (see Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1999). For this reason, and because the potential for structural changes to be limiting, providing awareness and training to acknowledge racial biases in the selection process should be considered. Such training can be helpful and should be mandated for all members who play a role in the hiring process (e.g., committee members, university president, athletic director, affirmative action officer).

These various propositions put forward make it is apparent systemic racism requires comprehensive change. While theoretical alterations should serve as the foundation and take hold first in order to have universal recognition of the problem

blacks as athletic leaders continuously endure, practical changes are the only way results will have an impactful and lasting effect. These proposals are merely the first step in alleviating racial injustice in collegiate athletic departments. Bridging the diversity divide by reconstructing the institutional culture (Chun & Evans, 2009) is the ultimate objective for fairness and equality. Once change has taken hold, Fink and Pastore (1999) stress it will take both determined and devoted leaders in order to manage diverse organizations.

### **Summary**

Guided by the systemic racism theoretical framework (Feagin, 2006), the purpose of this study was to apply a mixed-method design, divided into two different parts, to better understand racial inequality within the leadership structure of NCAA Division I and II athletics. Performance comparisons between white and black head coaches revealed that although there were no difference in performances between the coaches, black coaches were terminated significantly sooner than white coaches. This study also showed that black football coach job candidates were ascribed more negative attributes, perceived as less fit for the head coach position, and received less hiring recommendations than white candidates by the mock hiring committee. Considering these latter findings, white mock committee members were shown to be harsher towards the black job candidates (unqualified and qualified) compared to their white applicant counterparts, since they received lower ratings and more negative commentary across all three categories (i.e., attributes, job fit, hiring recommendation).

Taken together, the above findings indicate the underrepresentation of black football coaches in NCAA athletics is a result of both hiring and firing discrimination. However, because athletic directors are a majority white and make the hiring/firing decisions, and white mock committee members are more inclined to show racial bias in their hiring decisions compared to non-whites, then the predicament black coaches continue to face in college football seems to be more a result of white discrimination. Because gatekeepers were shown to hold blacks to higher standards while simultaneously holding whites to lower standards resulting in whites reproducing whites, the preservation of the white racial hierarchy in college sport was thus safeguarded. As the current study demonstrated, this black condition is no different than what blacks continue to face outside of sport. Because systemic racism theory has been employed to uncover the racial oppressive realities throughout the US (see Feagin, 2006, 2013, 2014), its application to American collegiate athletics in the current study seems most appropriate. Through its six primary tenets and its deliberate elucidation and interrogation of white economic domination and decision-making, systemic racism was shown to serve as the much needed epistemological and theoretical change in understanding the black predicament in college sport leadership.



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## APPENDIX A

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Department of Sociology



### Information Sheet

#### Hiring a Head Football Coach: Is He a Good Fit for the Job?

You are invited to participate in a dissertation study conducted by Michael Regan, a Sociology doctoral student at Texas A&M University. The purpose of this project is to apply a mixed-method design (quantitative and qualitative) to better understand representation concerns in the leadership structure of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletics. Obtaining a better understanding of the positioning of head coaches in collegiate athletics can highlight an important issue and point to key areas that can be approached with potential solutions. A total of 500 people will be invited to participate. You will be asked for approximately twenty minutes of your time to fill out a questionnaire (including instructions and debriefing).

You are invited to serve as a member of a hiring committee to determine if a potential job candidate for a head football coaching position for a NCAA Division I collegiate athletic program is a good fit for the job. You should know that this is completely voluntary, but your assistance is greatly needed. Whether you choose to volunteer or not in this research endeavor, your grade will not be affected in any way at all. You will not gain or lose points in this class for choosing to participate or not, respectively. Your choice to volunteer is completely up to you. Questionnaires will be distributed by Michael Regan and may eventually be compiled to be published in scholarly outlets. Michael Regan is in his final year as a doctoral student at Texas A&M University, and these questionnaires are part of his final dissertation project before graduation.

Because this is such a brief questionnaire, I will ask for your participation here, in this class, upon the completion of these instructions and those listed on the first page of the questionnaire. Your choice in filling out the questionnaire is your consent to participate; not filling out the questionnaire is not consenting to participate.

Not only is participation for this questionnaire voluntary, but it is also confidential. In order to protect your privacy, I ask that you not print/sign your name or include any other identifying information in the questionnaire. For those who choose to participate, you are not required to answer any questions on the questionnaire you do not want to answer; if you choose to not answer any questions, please skip and move on to the next question till you reach the end of the questionnaire. There are no costs to you except your time in filling out this questionnaire. Your participation will create no greater risk than what you would experience in everyday life. There are no direct or indirect benefits to you because of your participation. After completing the questionnaire, you will be debriefed with more information on this research project.

The records for this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published unless you wish so. Research records will be stored securely, and only Michael Regan will have access to this information. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Programs may access to these



records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly. Information related to this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law.

You may contact Michael Regan if you have any questions or concerns about this research at (415) 633-6765 or [mreganjr@tamu.edu](mailto:mreganjr@tamu.edu). An alternate contact: Dr. Joe Feagin, faculty advisor, Sociology Department, (979) 862-3952 or [feagin@tamu.edu](mailto:feagin@tamu.edu); or Dr. Jane Sell, Chair, Sociology Department, (979) 845-5133 or [j-sell@tamu.edu](mailto:j-sell@tamu.edu). Additionally, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office at (855) 795-8636, [irb@tamu.edu](mailto:irb@tamu.edu), or by visiting their website: <http://rcb.tamu.edu/humansubjects/resources/consentinfo>

**You are not giving up any legal rights by consenting to be in this study. Please make sure all your questions have been answered. Any new information about this research study will be provided to you as it becomes available. Please keep this copy of the information sheet.**

### **Purpose of Questionnaire**

The purpose of this questionnaire is for you, as part of a hiring committee, to evaluate a potential job candidate for the position of **Head Football Coach** for a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) **Division I** university athletic program, the highest level of collegiate athletics, to determine if this individual is a good fit for the job.

### **Head Coach Job Description**

**Position Summary:** The Head Coach of Football is responsible for initiating various aspects of the Football program, such as recruiting, scheduling opponents, training, and coaching team members. The Head Coach of Football is required to abide by the rules and regulations established by ABC University, the XYZ Conference (XYZC), and NCAA. ABC University is a member of the NCAA at the Division I level. This is a full time, twelve-month position.

#### **Essential Responsibilities:**

- Recruit, train, and coach the members of the football program
- Coordinate the development and promotion of the football program
- Generate additional funds for support of the program
- Organize and schedule practice sessions
- Schedule games with approval of the Athletic Director
- Manage field care and maintenance
- Administrative tasks including budget formulation
- Represent ABC University and the football program in a professional manner

#### **Secondary Responsibilities:**

- Assist in fundraising efforts for the Gridiron Club

#### **Education/Experience:**

Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. A strong commitment to the Student-Athlete concept and a working knowledge of the NCAA regulations is required. Three to five years collegiate coaching experience – preferably as a coordinator (offensive or defensive) and/or head coach - including effective leadership, communication, coaching and recruiting skills is preferred.

#### **Organizational Relationships:**

The Head Coach of Football reports to the Athletic Director and is a member of the Athletic Department.

### **Instructions**

You are asked to view the candidate's qualifications at the bottom of this page and complete the short questionnaire which follows. All information on this questionnaire will be kept in complete confidentiality. If you do not want to answer all or part of a particular question, please leave it blank and move on to the next. Your voluntary and anonymous participation is tremendously appreciated. If you choose to not participate, please leave the questionnaire blank and it will be picked up when those who are participating complete the questionnaire. Thank you.



### **Qualifications (qualified)**

- Master's degree in Sports Science
- Offensive football coordinator at a NCAA Division I university; two years
- Assistant football coach at a NCAA Division I university; four years
  - Head football coach at a Division II University; four years
- Played football at a NCAA Division I university; four years

### **Qualifications (unqualified)**

- Bachelor's degree in Sports Science
- Assistant football coach at a NCAA Division II university; two years
  - Manager at sporting goods store; seven years
- Played football at a NCAA Division II university; four years

### **Note:**

There are four different scenarios: qualified black applicant, qualified white applicant, unqualified black applicant, and unqualified white applicant; however, there will only be two different photos of the job applicant, one black and one white. Each participant in the study will receive only one of the four scenarios, and they will not know four different scenarios exist.

**1) How similar/different do you consider yourself to be to the job candidate?**

Very Different	Different	Somewhat different	Neutral	Somewhat similar	Similar	Very Similar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**2) In general, I would rate this applicant as:**

Lazy								Hard worker
Unreliable								Reliable
Unpleasant								Pleasant
Undisciplined								Disciplined
Aggressive								Easygoing
Follower								Leader
Unmotivated								Motivated
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**3) Briefly explain your choices directly above (please print clearly).**

**4) Based on this information, the candidate seems to have the qualities necessary for the job.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**5) I would say the applicant is a good fit for the job.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**6) The applicant seems to be a poor match for the job.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

**7) Briefly explain your three choices directly above (please print clearly).**

**8) Hiring this individual would be the wrong decision.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

**9) Given the opportunity, I would recommend the athletic department hire this individual.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**10) I would hire this individual for the head coach position.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**11) Briefly explain your three choices directly above (please print clearly).**

**12) What is your gender?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**13) What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**

**14) What race do you consider yourself to be? *Mark the one you most associate with.***

- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ White
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Hispanic or Latina
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**15) What is your grade level?**

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior